

CONSIDERATIONS
ON THE
PRINCIPAL EVENTS
OF
THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

POSTHUMOUS WORK OF
THE BARONESS DE STAËL.

EDITED BY
THE DUKE DE BROGLIE, AND THE BARON DE STAËL.

Les Révolutions qui arrivaient dans les grands états
ne sont point un effet du hazard, ni du caprice
de peuples. MEMOIRES DE SULLY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT.

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CONSIDERATIONS
ON THE
PRINCIPAL EVENTS
OF
THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

PART V.

CHAPTER I.

Of what constitutes legitimate Royalty.

IN considering royalty, as every institution ought to be considered, with reference to the happiness and dignity of nations, I shall say generally, but with due respect to exceptions, that princes of old

* We think it incumbent on us to mention again that a part of the third volume of this work was not revised by Madame de Staël. Some of the subsequent chapters will perhaps appear unfinished; but we felt it a duty to publish the MS. in the state in which we found it, without taking on us to make any addition whatever to the composition of the author.

It is proper also to remark that this portion of the work

established families are much more likely to promote the welfare of a country, than those princes who have raised themselves to a throne. Their talents are commonly less remarkable, but their disposition is more pacific; they have more prejudices, but less ambition; they are less dazzled by power, because they are told from their infancy that they were destined to it; and they are not in so great dread of losing it, which renders them less uneasy and less suspicious. Their mode of living and acting is more simple, as they are under no necessity of recurring to artificial means to strike the public, and have nothing new to gain in point of respect: habit and tradition serve as their guides. Add to this that outward splendour, a necessary attribute of royalty, seems perfectly in place in the case of princes whose forefathers have stood for centuries at the same elevation of rank. When a man is suddenly raised, the first in his family, to the highest dignity, he requires the illusion of glory to cast into the shade the

was written in the early part of the year 1816, and that it is consequently of importance to refer to that period the opinions, whether favourable or unfavourable, pronounced by the author. (*Note by the Editors.*)

contrast between royal pomp and his former situation of a private individual. But the glory calculated to inspire the respect which men willingly bestow on ancient pre-eminence can be acquired only by military exploits; and the world well knows what in civil government is almost always the conduct of great captains, of conquerors.

Besides, hereditary succession in a monarchy is indispensable to the tranquillity, I will even say, to the morality and improvement of the human mind. Elective royalty offers a vast field to ambition; the factions resulting from it have infallibly the effect of corrupting the heart, and of diverting the thoughts from every occupation which does not point to the interest of the morrow. But the prerogatives granted to birth, whether for founding a class of nobility or for fixing the succession to the throne in a single family, stand in need of the confirming hand of time; they differ in that respect from natural rights, which are independent of every conventional sanction. Now, the principle of hereditary succession is best established in ~~old~~ dynasties: but that this principle may not ~~become~~ contrary to reason, and to that public welfare for the sake of which it has been adopted, it must be

indissolubly connected with the reign of law. For were it necessary that millions should be governed by one man according to his will or caprice, it would be better, in such a case, that he were a man of talent ; and talent is more likely to be found when we have recourse to election, than when we follow the accidental course of birth.

In no country is hereditary succession more solidly established than in England, although that country has rejected the legitimacy founded on divine right, to substitute for it the hereditary succession sanctioned by a representative government. All sensible people are perfectly able to understand how, by virtue of laws passed by the delegates of a people and accepted by the king, it is the interest of nations, who also are hereditary and even legitimate, to acknowledge a dynasty called to the throne by right of primogeniture. If, on the other hand, royal power were founded on the doctrine that all power proceeds from God, nothing could be more favourable to usurpation ; for, in general, it is not power that is wanting to usurpers : the same men who proffered incense to Bonaparte are at this day the advocates for divine right. All their theory consists in asserting that strength is

strength, and that they are its high priests; we require a different worship with different ministers, and it is then only that we shall believe monarchy likely to be durable.

A change of dynasty, even when legally pronounced, has never taken place except in countries where the overturned government was arbitrary; for the personal character of the sovereign, being then decisive of the fate of the people, it became necessary, as we have often seen in history, to dispossess those who were unfit to govern; while, in our own day, the respectable sovereign of England was accounted the ruler for a considerable time after his faculties were gone, because the responsibility of ministers admitted of postponing the act for a regency. Thus, on the one hand, a representative government inspires greater respect for the sovereign in those who are unwilling to transform the affairs of this world into dogmas, lest the name of God should be taken in vain; while, on the other hand, a conscientious sovereign has not to apprehend that the welfare of the country should be wholly dependant on his individual life.

Legitimacy, such as it has been recently proclaimed, is then altogether inseparable from a constitutional limitation of prerogative. Whether the

limitation that formerly existed in France was insufficient to oppose an effectual barrier to the encroachments of power, or whether it was gradually infringed and obliterated, is a point of no importance: it ought to commence from this time forward, even if the antiquity of its origin could not be proved.

One is ashamed to go back to the evidence of history to prove that a thing equally absurd and unjust ought neither to be adopted nor maintained. It has not been argued in favour of slavery that it has lasted four thousand years; nor did the state of servitude which succeeded it appear more equitable for having subsisted above ten centuries; the slave-trade has never been defended as an ancient institution of our fathers. The inquisition and torture, which are of older date, have, I confess, been re-established in one country in Europe; but this did not, I imagine, take place with the approbation even of the defenders of all ancient usages. It would be curious to know, to which generation among our fathers the gift of infallibility was granted. Which is that past age which ought to serve as a model to the present, and from which one cannot make the slightest departure without falling into pernicious innovation? If every change, whatever be its influence on the

general good and progress of mankind, be censurable merely because it is a change, it will not be difficult to oppose to the ancient order of things invoked by you, another order of things still more ancient to which it has succeeded. At that rate, the fathers of those of your ancestors whom you wish to take as guides, and the fathers of those fathers, would be entitled to complain of their sons and grandsons, as of a turbulent youth impatient to overthrow their wise institutions. What human being, gifted with good sense, can pretend that a change in manners and opinion ought not to be productive of a corresponding change in our institutions? Must government then be always three hundred years in arrear? Or shall a new Joshua command the sun to stand still in his course? "No," it will be said; "there are things that ought to be changed, but the government ought to be immutable." There could not be a more effectual way of reducing revolutions to a system; for if the government of a country refused to participate in any degree in the progressive advance of men and things, it will necessarily be overthrown by them. Can men coolly discuss whether the form of the governments of the present time ought to be in correspondence with

the wants of the existing generation, or of those which are no more? whether it is in the dark and disputed antiquity of history that a statesman ought to look for his rule of conduct; or whether that statesman should possess the talents and firmness of a Pitt, should know where power resides, whither opinion tends, and where he is to fix his point of support to act on the national feeling? For without the national wish, nothing is to be done—with it, every thing, except what would tend to degrade it: for that disastrous purpose bayonets are the only instruments.

In recurring to the history of the past, as to the law and the prophets, the same thing that happened to the latter happens to history: it becomes the subject of a war of endless controversy. Shall we at present aim at ascertaining from the documents of the age, whether a perverse king, Philip le Bel, or a mad king, Charles VI. had ministers, who, in their name, allowed the nation to be of some account? Besides, the facts in French history, far from supporting the doctrine which we combat, are confirmative of the existence of a primitive compact between the nation and the king, as fully as human reason demonstrates its necessity. I have, I believe, proved that in

Europe, as in France, it is liberty that is *ancient*, and despotism that is modern: also that those defenders of the rights of nations who are stigmatized as innovators have perpetually appealed to the past. Even were this truth not evident, the result would be only a more pressing demand on us as a duty, to introduce the reign of that justice which may not as yet have commenced. But the principles of liberty are so deeply engraven on the heart of man, that, if the history of every government presents a picture of the efforts of power to encroach, it exhibits likewise a picture of popular struggles against these efforts.

CHAPTER II. .

Of the political Doctrine of some French Emigrants and their Adherents.

THE opponents of the French revolution of 1789, whether nobility, clergy, or lawyers, repeated incessantly that no change was necessary in regard to government, because the intermediary bodies which then existed were sufficient to prevent despotic measures; and they now proclaim despotic forms as a re-establishment of the old government. This inconsistency in point of principles is consistency in point of interest. So long as the privileged classes served as a limit to the royal authority, they were adverse to arbitrary power in the Crown; but since the time that the people has found means to take the place of the privileged classes, the latter have rallied under the royal prerogative, and would give the character of rebellion to all constitutional opposition, to all political liberty.

These persons found the power of kings on divine right; an absurd doctrine, which caused

the overthrow of the Stuarts, and which, even at that time, was denied by their most enlightened adherents, from a dread that it would for ever bar their return to England. Lord Erskine, in his admirable pleading in favour of the Dean of St. Asaph, on a question relative to the liberty of the press, begins by quoting Locke's treatise on the points of divine right and passive obedience, in which that celebrated philosopher positively declares, that every agent of royal authority who goes beyond the latitude allowed by law, should be considered an instrument of tyranny, and that on this account it is lawful to shut one's door and repel him by force, as if we were attacked by a robber or a pirate. Locke admits the objection so often repeated, that a doctrine of this kind disseminated among the people might encourage insurrection. "There exists no truth," he says, "which may not lead to error, no remedy which may not become a poison. There is not one of the gifts which we hold from the bounty of God, of which we could make use, if the possible abuse of them were a reason for depriving us of their use. At this rate the Gospels ought not to have been published; for although they are the foundation of all the moral ties which unite men

in society, yet an imperfect knowledge, and an injudicious study of the Holy Word, has urged many men to madness. Weapons necessary for defence may serve for vengeance and murder. The fire that warms us exposes us to conflagration; the medicines which cure us, may cause our death. In short, one could not instruct men on any point of government, one could not profit by any of the lessons of history, if the excesses to which false reasoning may be carried were always to be brought forward as an argument to prevent freedom of thought."

The sentiments of Mr. Locke, said Lord Erskine, were published three years after the accession of King William to the throne of England, and at a time when that monarch had raised the author to a high rank in the state. But Bolingbroke, not less celebrated than Locke in the republic of letters, and in the theatre of the world, expresses himself on this question in the same manner. He who had exerted himself to restore James II. to the throne, laid the greatest stress on exculpating the Jacobites from what he considered a dangerous calumny—the charge of attempting to found the claims of James II. on divine right, and not on the English constitution. And it was from the Con-

inent, to which he had been banished by the House of Hanover, that he wrote what follows: "The duty of a people," says Bolingbroke, "is now so clearly established, that no man can be unacquainted with the circumstances in which he ought to obey, or those in which he ought to resist. Conscience has no longer to contend with reason. We know that we ought to defend the crown at the cost of our fortune and our life, if the crown protects us, and does not depart from the limits assigned by law; but we know likewise that if it exceed these limits, it is our duty to resist it."

I shall observe incidentally that this divine right, refuted so long ago in England, is kept up in France by an equivocation. Its advocates urge the established phrase: "by the grace of God, king of France and Navarre." The words so often repeated, that our kings hold their crown from God and their sword, were intended to free them from the extraordinary pretension advanced by the popes to crown and to remove sovereigns. The emperors of Germany, who undoubtedly were elective, assumed, in like manner, the title of "Emperor by the grace of God." The kings of France, who, in virtue of the feudal system, rendered homage for this or that province, were not less in the habit

of using this form ; while princes and clerical dignitaries, down to the humblest members of the feudal body, took the title of lords and prelates by the grace of God. At this day the king of England employs the same form, which in fact is nothing but an expression of Christian humility ; yet a positive law in England declares guilty of high treason whoever should support divine right. These pretended privileges of despotism, which never can have any other support than that of force, are like the passage in St. Paul : “ Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers ; for there is no power but of God.” Bonaparte insisted greatly on the authority of this apostle ; he obliged all the clergy of France and the Low Countries to preach on this text ; and in fact one could not well refuse to Bonaparte the title of “ a higher power.” But what could be the meaning of St. Paul, except that the Christians ought not to interfere with the political factions of his time ? Will it be alleged that St. Paul meant to justify tyranny ? Did he not himself resist the orders issued by Nero when he preached the Christian faith ? And were the martyrs obedient to the prohibition of professing their worship enjoined to them by the emperors ? St. Peter calls government very properly a human

order. There is not a single question, either in morals or politics, in which we are under the necessity of admitting what is called authority. The conscience of men is to them a perpetual revelation, their reason a succession of unalterable facts. That which constitutes the essence of the Christian religion is the harmony of our private feelings with the words of Jesus Christ. That which constitutes society is the principles of justice applied in different ways, but always recognized as the basis of power and of law.

The nobility, as we have shown in the course of this work, had passed, under Richelieu, from the condition of independent vassals to that of courtiers. One would almost say that a change of dress was indicative of a change of character. Under Henry IV. the French dress had in it something chivalrous; but the large perukes, and that sedentary and affected dress that was worn at the court of Louis IV. did not begin till under Louis XIII. During the youth of Louis XIV. the impulse given by the faction of the *Fronde* still called forth some energy, but in his latter years, in the regency, and during the reign of Louis XV. can we quote a single public man who deserves a name in history? What court intrigues occupied the

great lords ! And in what a state of ignorance and frivolity did not the Revolution find the greatest part of them !

I have spoken of emigration, its motives, and its consequences. Of the men of family who took that step, some remained constantly out of France, and followed the Royal Family with a commendable fidelity. The majority returned to France under the reign of Bonaparte, and many of them became confirmed in his school in the doctrine of passive obedience, of which they made the most scrupulous trial in submission to him whom they were bound to consider a usurper. That the emigrants are justly irritated by the sale of their property, I can well conceive : such a confiscation is infinitely less justifiable than the highly legal disposal of the property of the church. But must a resentment, in other respects very natural, be directed against all the good sense of which mankind is in possession in this world ? One would say that the progress of the age, the example of England, and even a knowledge of the actual state of France, are so foreign to their minds that they would, I believe, be tempted to strike out the word nation from their language as a revolutionary term. Would it not be better, even as a matter of calculation, to be-

come frankly reconciled to all the principles which accord with the dignity of man? What proselytes can they make with this doctrine *ab irato*, without any other foundation than personal interest? They would have an absolute king, an exclusive religion, an intolerant priesthood, a court nobility founded on genealogy, a *Tiers Etat*, acquiring from time to time distinction by *lettres de noblesse*, a population immersed in ignorance and without rights, an army acting as a mere machine, ministers without responsibility, no liberty of the press, no juries, no civil liberty; but they would have police spies, and hired newspapers to extol this work of darkness. They call for a king of unbounded authority, that he may be able to restore to them all the privileges that they have lost, and which the deputies of the nation, be they who they may, would never consent to restore. They desire that the Catholic religion alone should be tolerated: some, because they flatter themselves that thus they should recover the property of the church; others, because they hope to find zealous auxiliaries of despotism in some of the religious orders. The clergy of France contended formerly against the crown, in support of the authority of Rome; but at present all persons of the privileged classes are leagued together. It is the people

only which has no other support than itself. These men desire a *Tiers Etat*, incapable of occupying any elevated station, that all such offices may be reserved for the nobility. They would have the people receive no education, that they may be a flock more easily guided. They would have an army with officers accustomed to arrest, denounce, and put to death; in short, more the enemies of their fellow-citizens than of foreigners. For to re-establish the old state of things in France, without the glory that existed on the one part, and the portion of liberty that existed on the other; without the habits of the past which are broken; and all this in opposition to the invincible attachment to the new order of things,—a foreign force would be necessary to keep the nation in a state of perpetual compression.

These men are adverse to juries, because they wish for the re-establishment of the old parliaments of the kingdom. But besides that these parliaments were formerly unable, notwithstanding their honourable efforts, to prevent either arbitrary condemnation, *lettres de cachet*, or taxes, imposed in spite of their remonstrances, they would be in the situation of other privileged persons; they would no longer be animated by their former spirit of

resistance to the encroachments of ministers. Re-instated against the wish of the nation, and merely by the will of the sovereign, how could they act in opposition to kings, who might say to them, "If we do not continue to support you, the nation, which is no longer disposed to bear with you, will overthrow you." Finally, to maintain a system in contradiction to the public wish, it is necessary to have the power of arresting any one, as well as to give ministers the means of imprisoning without trial, and of preventing the accused from printing a single line in their defence. Society in such a state would be the prey of a few, and the bane of the many. Henry IV. would be as much disgusted by such a state of things as Franklin; and there is, in the history of France, no period so remote as to offer any thing similar to such barbarism. At a time when all Europe seems to advance towards gradual improvement, ought one to pretend to make use of the just horror inspired by a few years of revolution to establish oppression and degradation in a nation so lately invincible?

Such are the principles of government disclosed in a number of writings by emigrants and their adherents; or rather such are the consequences of party egotism; for we cannot give the name of

principles to that theory which interdicts refutation, and does not bear the light. The situation of the emigrants dictates to them the opinions which they advance, and hence the reason that France has always dreaded that power should be lodged in their hands. It is not the former dynasty that inspires any aversion to the country ; it is the party which wishes to reign in its name. When the emigrants were recalled by Bonaparte, he was able to restrain them ; and the public did not perceive that they had influence. But as they call themselves exclusively the defenders of the Bourbons, there has existed an apprehension that the gratitude of that family towards them might lead to entrusting the military and civil authority to those against whom the nation had contended during twenty-five years, and whom it had always seen in the ranks of the hostile armies. Nor is it the individuals composing the emigrant party who displease those of the French, who never quitted their country ; they have been intermingled in the camps, and even in the court of Bonaparte. But as the political doctrine of the emigrants is contrary to the national welfare, to the rights for which two millions of men have perished on the field of battle, to the rights for which, (and this is still more grievous)

crimes committed in the name of liberty have recoiled on France, the nation will never willingly bend under the yoke of emigrant opinions; and it is the dread of seeing itself constrained to this which has prevented it from taking part in the recall of its ancient princes. The constitutional charter, by giving a guarantee to the good principles of the revolution, is the palladium of the throne and of the country.

CHAPTER III.

Of the Circumstances that render a Representative Government at this time more necessary in France than in any other Country.

THE resentment of those who have suffered greatly by the Revolution, and who cannot flatter themselves with recovering their privileges, but by intolerance in religion and despotism in the crown, is, as has just been said, the greatest danger to which France can be exposed. Her happiness and her glory consist in a treaty between the two parties, taking the constitutional charter as the basis. For besides that the prosperity of France depends on the advantages acquired by the mass of the nation in 1789, I know not any thing that could be more humiliating to Frenchmen than to be sent back to servitude like children subjected to chastisement.

Two great historical facts may be, in some re-

spects, compared to the restoration of the Bourbons: the return of the Stuarts in England, and the accession of Henry IV. Let us first examine the more recent of the two: we shall afterwards return to the former, which concerns France more nearly.

Charles II. was recalled to England after the crimes of the revolutionists and the despotism of Cromwell; the reaction always produced on the minds of the vulgar by crimes committed under the pretext of a noble cause, repressed the spring of the English people towards liberty. It was almost the entire nation, which, represented by its parliament, demanded the return of Charles II.; it was the English army that proclaimed him; no foreign troops interfered in this restoration: and in this respect Charles II. was in a much better situation than that of the French princes. But as a parliament was already established in England, the son of Charles I. was not called on either to accept or to grant a new charter. The difference between him and the party who had caused the Revolution related to quarrels of religion: the English nation desired the Reformation, and considered the Catholic religion as irreconcilable with liberty.

Charles II. was then obliged to call himself a Protestant; but as, in the bottom of his heart, he professed another faith, he acted, during his whole reign, an artful part towards the public; and when his brother, who had more violence of temper, permitted all the atrocities which the name of Jefferies recalls, the nation felt the necessity of having at its head a prince who should be king by means of liberty, instead of being king in despite of liberty. Some time after, an act was passed excluding from the succession every prince who should be a Catholic, or who should have espoused a princess of that religion. The principle of this act was to maintain hereditary succession by not trusting to chance for a sovereign, but by formally excluding whoever should not adopt the political and religious faith of the majority of England. The oath pronounced by William III. and subsequently by all his successors, is a proof of the contract between the nation and the king; and a law of England, as I have already mentioned, declares guilty of high treason whoever shall support the divine right! that is, the doctrine by which a king possesses a nation as a landholder possesses a farm, the people and the cattle being placed on

the same ^{*} footing, and the one having as little as the other a right to alter their situation.

When the English welcomed back the old family with delight, they were hopeful that it would adopt a new doctrine; but the direct inheritors of power refusing this, the friends of liberty rallied under the standard of him who submitted to the condition without which there is no legitimacy. The revolution of France, down to the fall of Bonaparte, is greatly similar to that of England. Its resemblance with the war of the league and the accession of Henry IV. is less striking; but, in return, we say it with pleasure, the spirit and character of Louis XVIII. recalls to our minds Henry IV. much more than Charles II.

The abjuration of Henry IV. considered only in regard to its political influence, was an act by which he adopted the opinion of the majority of the French. The edict of Nantes may also be compared to the declaration of the 2d of May, 1814, by Louis XVIII.; that wise treaty between the two parties appeased them during the life of Henry IV. By citing these two eras, so different in themselves, and on which one might long dispute, for rights alone are incontestable, while facts

frequently give rise to different interpretations, my aim has been only to show what history and reason confirm; that is, that after great commotions in a state, a sovereign can resume the reins of government only in as far as he sincerely adopts the prevailing opinion of his country, seeking, however, at the same time, to render the sacrifices of the minority as little painful as possible. A king ought, like Henry IV., to renounce, in some measure, even those who have adhered to him in his adversity; for, if Louis XIV. was to blame in pronouncing the well known words "*L'état, c'est moi*," "the state is myself;" a benevolent sovereign should, on the other hand, say "*Moi, c'est l'état*," "I know no interests but those of the state."

The mass of the people has, ever since the Revolution, dreaded the ascendancy of the old privileged orders; besides, as the princes had been absent for twenty-three years, they had become unknown to the nation; and the foreign troops, in 1814, traversed a great part of France, without hearing either regret expressed for Bonaparte, or a decided wish for any form of government. It was then a political combination, not a popular movement,

that reinstated the ancient dynasty in France; and if the Stuarts, recalled by the nation, without foreign aid, and supported by a nobility that had never emigrated, lost their crown by seeking to enforce their divine right, how much more necessary was it for the House of Bourbon to make again a compact with France, that they might soften the grief necessarily caused to a spirited people by the influence of foreigners on its interior government. Hence the necessity of an appeal to the nation to sanction what force had established. Such, as we shall presently see, was the opinion of a man, the Emperor Alexander, who, although a sovereign with unlimited power, possesses sufficient superiority of mind and soul to excite jealousy and envy like persons in private life. Louis XVIII. by his constitutional charter, and, above all, by the wisdom of his declaration of the 2d of May, by his surprising extent of information, and his imposing grace of manner, supplied in many respects what was wanting in point of popular inauguration on his return. But we are still of opinion, and we shall presently state our reasons, that Bonaparte would not within a year have been welcomed by a considerable party, if the King's

ministers had cordially established in France a representative government along with the principles of the charter, and if an interest for constitutional liberty had supplied the place of that for military renown.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the Entry of the Allies into Paris, and the different Parties which then existed in France.

THE four great powers, England, Austria, Russia, and Prussia, who formed a coalition in 1813 to repel the aggressions of Bonaparte had never before acted in union, and no continental state was able to resist such a mass of force. The French nation might perhaps have still been capable of defending itself before despotism had compressed all its energy ; but, as the struggle on the part of France was to be sustained only by soldiers, army against army, the balance of numbers was entirely, and beyond all proportion, in favour of the foreigners. The sovereigns who led on these troops, amounting, as well regulars as militia, to nearly eight hundred thousand men, displayed a bravery that gives them an indelible claim to the affection of their people ; but amidst these great personages, we must specially mention the Emperor of Russia, who contributed most eminently to the success of the coalition of 1813.

Far from thinking the merit of the Emperor Alexander exaggerated by flattery, I would almost say that sufficient justice is not done him, because, like all the friends of liberty, he labours under the prepossession existing against such sentiments in what is called the good company of Europe. People are always attributing his political views to personal calculations, as if in our days disinterested sentiments could no longer enter the human heart. Doubtless, it is of high importance to Russia that France should not be crushed, and France can be restored only by the aid of a constitutional government supported by the assent of the nation. But, was the emperor Alexander actuated by selfish thoughts when he conferred on the part of Poland ceded to him by the last treaties those rights which human reason at present calls for in all directions? Some wish to reproach him with the admiration which he testified during a time for Bonaparte: but was it not natural that great military talents should dazzle a young sovereign of a warlike spirit? Was it possible that he, distant as he was from France, should penetrate, like us, through the artifices of which Bonaparte made a frequent use, in preference even to all the other means at his command? When the

Emperor Alexander acquired a thorough knowledge of the enemy with whom he had to contend, what resistance did he not oppose to him? One of his capitals was taken: still he refused that peace which Napoleon offered him with extreme eagerness. After the troops of Bonaparte were driven from Russia, Alexander carried all his force into Germany to aid in the deliverance of that country; and when the remembrance of the French power still caused hesitation in regard to the plan of campaign proper to be followed, he decided that it was indispensable to march to Paris; and all the successes of Europe are connected with the boldness of that resolution. It would be painful to me, I confess, to render homage to this determination, had not the Emperor Alexander in 1814 acted a generous part towards France; and had not he, in the advice that he gave, constantly respected the honour and liberty of the nation. The liberal side is that which he has supported on every occasion; and if he has not made it triumph so much as might have been wished, ought we not at least to be surprised that such an instinct for what is noble, such a love of what is just, should have been born in his heart, like a flower of heaven, in the midst of so many obstacles?

I have had the honour of conversing several times with the Emperor Alexander at St. Petersburg and at Paris, at the time of his reverses, as at the time of his triumph. Equally unaffected, equally calm in either situation, his mind, penetrating, judicious, and wise, has ever been consistent. His conversation is wholly unlike what is commonly called an official conversation ; no insignificant question, no mutual embarrassment condemns those who approach him to those Chinese phrases, if we may so express ourselves, which are more like bows than words. The love of humanity inspires the Emperor Alexander with the desire of knowing the true sentiments of others, and of treating, with those whom he thinks worthy of the discussion, on the great views which may be conducive to the progress of social order. On his first entrance into Paris, he discoursed with Frenchmen of different opinions, like a man who can venture to enter the lists of conversation without reserve.

In war his conduct is equally courageous and humane ; and of all lives it is only his own that he exposes without reflection. We are justified in expecting from him, that he will be eager to do his country all the good that is practicable in the pre-

sent state of its civilization. Although he keeps on foot a great armed force, we should do wrong to consider him in Europe as an ambitious monarch. His opinions have more sway with him than his passions ; and it is not, so far as I can judge, at conquest that he aims ; a representative government, religious toleration, the improvement of mankind by liberty and the Christian religion, are no chimeras in his eyes. If he accomplish his designs, posterity will award him all the honours of genius ; but if the circumstances by which he is surrounded, if the difficulty of finding instruments to second him, do not permit of his realizing his wishes, those who shall have known him will at least be apprized that he had conceived the most elevated views.

It was at the time of the invasion of Russia by the French, that the Emperor Alexander met the Prince Royal of Sweden, formerly General Bernadotte, in the town of Abo, on the borders of the Baltic. Bonaparte had made every effort to prevail on that prince to join him in his attack against Russia : he had made him the tempting offer of Finland, so lately taken from Sweden, and so bitterly regretted by the Swedes. Bernadotte, from respect to Alexander, and from hatred to the

tyranny which Bonaparte exercised over France and Europe, joined the coalition and refused the proposals of Napoleon, which consisted principally in a permission granted to Sweden to take or retake all that might suit her, either among her neighbours or her allies.

The Emperor of Russia, in his conference with the Prince Royal of Sweden, asked his advice as to the means that ought to be employed against the invasion of the French. Bernadotte explained them like an able general, who had formerly defended France against foreigners, and his confidence in the final result of the war had considerable weight. Another circumstance does great honour to the sagacity of the Crown Prince: when news were brought to him that the French had entered Moscow, the envoys of the different powers, who were then at his palace at Stockholm, were thunderstruck; he alone declared firmly that, from the date of that event, the campaign was lost to the conquerors; and addressing himself to the Austrian envoy, at a time when the troops of that power still formed a part of the army of Napoleon: "You may," he said, "write to your Emperor that Napoleon is lost, although the capture of Moscow seems the greatest exploit in his military

career." I was near him when he expressed himself in this way, and did not, I confess, put entire faith in his predictions. But his profound knowledge of the art of war disclosed to him an event at that time least expected by others. In the vicissitudes of the ensuing year, Bernadotte rendered eminent services to the coalition, as well by participating, with activity and intelligence, in the war at moments of the greatest difficulty, as in keeping up the hopes of the Allies, when, after the battles gained in Germany by the new army raised, as if from the earth, by the voice of Bonaparte, they began once more to consider the French as invincible.

Yet Bernadotte has enemies in Europe, because he did not enter France with his troops, at the time that the Allies, after their triumph at Leipsic, passed the Rhine and marched on Paris. It is, I believe, very easy to justify his conduct on this occasion. Had the interest of Sweden required the invasion of France, it would have been incumbent on him, in making the attack, to forget that he was a Frenchman, as he had accepted the honour of being the head of another state; but Sweden was interested only in the deliverance of Germany; to bring France into a state of subjugation

tion is incompatible with the security of the northern powers. It was therefore allowable in General Bernadotte to stop short on reaching the frontiers of his native land ; to decline bearing arms against that country to which he was indebted for his existence and his fame. It has been pretended that he was ambitious to succeed Bonaparte ; no one knows what an ardent man may imagine in respect to fame ; but it is at least certain, that by not rejoining the Allies with his troops, he deprived himself of every chance of success through their means. Bernadotte therefore showed on this occasion only an honourable feeling, without being able to flatter himself with deriving from it any personal advantage.

A singular anecdote relative to the Prince Royal of Sweden, deserves to be put on record. Bonaparte, far from wishing him to be chosen by the Swedish nation, was very dissatisfied at it, and Bernadotte had reason to fear that he would not allow him to quit France. In the field Bernadotte has considerable boldness, in all that relates to politics he is prudent ; and knowing perfectly how to feel his ground, he marches with force only towards that point of which fortune opens to him the path. For several years back he had

dexterously kept himself in a middle state between the good and bad graces of the Emperor of France; but having too much talent to be ranked among the officers formed for blind obedience, he was always more or less suspected by Napoleon, who did not like to find a sabre and an independent mind in the same man. Bernadotte, on relating to Napoleon in what manner his election had just taken place in Sweden, looked at him with those dark and piercing eyes, which give something very singular to the expression of his features. Bonaparte walked beside him and stated objections which Bernadotte refuted as tranquilly as possible, endeavouring to conceal the keenness of his wishes: finally, after an hour's conversation, Napoleon said suddenly to him: "Well, let destiny be fulfilled!" Bernadotte soon caught the words, but to be the more assured of his good fortune, he made them be repeated as if he had not understood their meaning: "Let destiny be fulfilled," said Napoleon once more, and Bernadotte departed to reign over Sweden. There are some examples of points being gained in conversation with Bonaparte, in contradiction to his interest; but it is one of those chances, connected with his temper, on which no calculation could be made.

Bonaparte's campaign against the allies in the winter of 1814 is generally admitted to have been very able; and even those Frenchmen whom he had proscribed for ever could not themselves avoid wishing that he should succeed in saving the independence of their country. What a melancholy combination, and how unexampled in history! A despot was then defending the cause of liberty by endeavouring to repulse the foreigners whom his ambition had brought on the French territory! He did not deserve of Providence the honour of repairing the mischief that he had done. The French nation remained neuter in the great struggle about to decide its fate; that nation formerly so animated, so vehement, was ground to dust by fifteen years of tyranny. Those who knew the country were well aware that life remained at the bottom of those paralyzed minds, and union in the midst of the apparent division produced by discontent. But one would have said that, during his reign, Bonaparte had covered the eyes of France like those of a falcon, who is kept hood-winked, until let loose on his prey. People knew not where to look for the cause of the country: they would no longer hear of Bonaparte, nor of any of the governments whose

names were mentioned. The moderate conduct of the European powers prevented them from being considered as enemies, without its being possible, however, to welcome them as allies. France, in this condition, fell under the yoke of foreigners, because she had not redeemed herself from that of Bonaparte; from what evils would she not have escaped if, as in the early days of the revolution, she had preserved in her heart a sacred horror of despotism!

Alexander entered Paris almost alone, without guards, without any precautions; the people were pleased at this generous confidence, the crowd pressed around his horse, and the French, so long victorious, did not yet feel themselves humiliated in the first moments of their defeat. Every party hoped for a deliverer in the Emperor of Russia, and certainly he carried that wish in his breast. He stopped at the house of M. de Talleyrand, who having, throughout all the stages of the revolution, preserved the reputation of a man of much talent, was capable of giving him correct information on every point. But, as we have already mentioned, M. de Talleyrand considers politics as a manœuvre, to be regulated by the prevailing winds, and stability of opinion is by no means

his characteristic. This is called cleverness, and something of this cleverness is perhaps necessary to veer on thus to the end of a mortal life; but the fate of a country should be guided by men whose principles are invariable; and in times of trouble, above all, that flexibility, which seems the height of political art, plunges public affairs into insurmountable difficulties. Be this as it may, M. de Talleyrand is, when he aims at pleasing, the most agreeable man whom the old government produced; it was chance that placed him amidst popular dissensions: he brought to them the manners of a court; and those graces, which ought to be suspected by the spirit of democracy, have often seduced men of coarse character, who felt themselves captivated, without knowing how. Nations that aim at liberty, should beware of choosing such defenders; those poor nations without armies, and without treasure, inspire attachment only to conscientious minds.

A government proclaimed in Paris by the victorious armies of Europe was an event of high interest to the world; whatever that government might be, it could not be concealed that the circumstances which led to its establishment rendered its position very difficult: no people possessed

of a spirit of pride can bear the intervention of foreigners in its interior affairs ; in vain will these foreigners do whatever is reasonable and wise ; their influence is sufficient to pervert even happiness itself. The Emperor of Russia, impressed with the importance of public opinion, did all that was in his power to leave to that opinion as much liberty as circumstances allowed. The army was desirous of a regency, in the hope that, under the minority of the son of Napoleon, the same government, and the same military employments, would be kept up. The nation wished that which it will always wish—the maintenance of constitutional principles. Some individuals believed that the Duke of Orleans, a man of talent, a sincere friend of liberty, and a soldier in the cause of France at Jemmappes, would serve as a mediator between the different interests ; but at that time he had hardly lived in France, and his name was indicative rather of a treaty than of a party. The impulse of the allied sovereigns was naturally in favour of the old dynasty ; it was called for by the clergy, the men of family, and the adherents whom they were collecting in some departments of the South and West. But at the same time, the army contained scarcely any officers or soldiers

reared in obedience to princes absent for so many years. The interests accumulated by the revolution, the suppression of tithes and feudal rights, the sale of national lands, the extinction of the privileges of the *noblesse* and clergy ; all that constitutes the wealth and greatness of the mass of the people, rendered it necessarily inimical to the partizans of the old government, who came forward as the exclusive defenders of the royal family ; and, until the constitutional charter had given proof of the moderation and enlightened wisdom of Louis XVIII. it was natural that the return of the Bourbons should excite an apprehension of all the evils attendant on the restoration of the Stuarts in England.


The Emperor Alexander estimated all those circumstances, as would have been done by an enlightened Frenchman, and was of opinion that a compact ought to be concluded, or rather renewed, between the nation and the king : for if in former ages the barons assigned limits to the throne, and required of the monarch the maintenance of their privileges, it was fair that France, which now formed only one people, should, by its representatives, possess those rights which the nobility enjoyed formerly, and enjoy still in several countries

of Europe. Besides, Louis XVIII. having returned to France only by the support of foreigners, it was of importance to draw a veil over that mortifying circumstance, by voluntary and mutual securities between Frenchmen and their king. Policy as well as equity counselled this system; and if Henry IV. after a long civil war, submitted to the necessity of adopting the creed of the majority of the French, a man of so much judgment as Louis XVIII. might well conquer such a kingdom as France, by accepting a situation similar to that of king of England: in truth it is not so much to be disdained.

CHAPTER V.

Of the Circumstances which accompanied the first return of the House of Bourbon in 1814.

WHEN the return of the Bourbons was determined on by the allied powers, M. de Talleyrand brought forward the principle of legitimacy, to serve as a rallying point to the new spirit of party that was about to prevail in France. Doubtless, we cannot too often repeat, that hereditary succession to the throne is an excellent pledge for tranquillity and comfort; but as the Turks also enjoy this advantage, we may well conclude that certain other conditions are necessary to insure the welfare of a state. Moreover, nothing is more distressing at a critical conjuncture than those words of command (*mots d'ordre*), which prevent most men from exercising their reasoning powers. Had the revolutionists proclaimed not mere equality, but equality in the eye of the law, this qualification would have been sufficient to excite some reflection in the public mind. The case would be the same with legitimacy, if we add to it the necessity of limiting the



royal power. But either of these words, equality or liberty, when without qualification, are only such as would justify a sentinel who should fire on the man that did not instantly give the watch-word, on the demand "who comes here?"

The senate was pointed out by M. de Talleyrand to discharge the functions of representatives of the French nation on this solemn occasion. Had the senate the power of assuming this right? and that power, which it legally had not, was it entitled to by its past conduct? As there was not time to convene deputies from the departments, was it not at least necessary to call together the legislative body? That assembly had given proofs of decision in the latter period of the reign of Bonaparte, and the nomination of its members belonged somewhat more to France herself. However, the senate pronounced the forfeiture of the crown by that same Napoleon to whom it was indebted for its existence. The forfeiture was grounded on principles of liberty; why were not these recognized before the entrance of the allies into France? The senators, it will be said, were then without strength; all power was in the hands of the army. There are, we must admit, circumstances in which the most courageous men have no

means of coming forward with activity ; but there are none that oblige men to do any thing contrary to conscience. The noble minority of the senate, Cabanis, Tracy, Lanjuinais, Boissy d'Anglas, Volney, Collaud, Chollet, &c. had fully proved, during several years, that a passive resistance was possible.

Senators, among whom there were several members of the National Convention, called for the return of the old dynasty, and M. de Talleyrand boasted that, on this occasion, he obtained the call of *Vive le Roi* from those who had voted the death of Louis XVI. But what good was to be expected from this kind of address, and would there not have been more dignity in excluding these men from such a deliberation ? Is it necessary to practise deceit even on the guilty ? And if they are so bent to servitude as to bow the head to proscription, what purpose is gained by making use of them ? Again, it was this senate which prepared the constitution to be presented to the acceptance of Louis XVIII. ; and in those articles so essential to the liberty of France, M. de Talleyrand, at that time all powerful, admitted the introduction of a most ridiculous condition, a condition calculated to invalidate all the others : the

senators declared themselves, and, along with them, their pensions, hereditary. That men hated and ruined should make awkward efforts to preserve their situation is perfectly natural: but ought M. de Talleyrand to permit it; and ought we not to conclude, from this apparent negligence, that a man of his penetration was already desirous of pleasing the non-constitutional royalists, by allowing the public to lose the respect otherwise due to the principles advanced in the declaration of the senate! This was facilitating to the king the means of disdaining that declaration, and of returning without any kind of previous engagement.

Did M. de Talleyrand at that time flatter himself that, by this excess of complaisance, he should escape the implacable resentment of party spirit? Had he had during life enough of constancy in point of gratitude, to imagine that others would not fail towards him in that respect? did he hope that he alone should escape the shipwreck of his party, when all history informs us, that there are political hatreds which never admit of reconciliation? Prejudiced men, whatever be the reform in question, never forgive those who have in any degree participated in new ideas; no penitence, no quarantine, can give them confidence in this respect: they

make use of the individuals who have abjured ; but if these pretended converts wish to retain a remnant of their past principles, even in small points, their fury is forthwith rekindled against them. The partisans of the old *regime* consider those of a representative government, as in a state of revolt against legitimate and absolute power. What avail, then, in the eyes of these non-constitutional royalists, the services which the old friends of the revolution may render their cause ? They are considered a beginning of expiation, and nothing more. How did M. de Talleyrand not feel that, for the interest of the king as for that of France, it was necessary that a constitutional compact should tranquillize the public mind, consolidate the throne, and present the French nation to the eyes of all Europe, not as rebels who ask forgiveness, but as citizens who become connected with their sovereign by mutual duties ?

Louis XVIII. returned without having acknowledged the necessity of such a compact ; but being personally a man of a very enlightened mind, and whose ideas extended far beyond the circle of courts, he supplied it, in some measure, by his declaration of 2d May, dated from St. Ouen. He thus granted what the nation wished him to

accept : but this declaration, superior to the constitutional charter in regard to the interests of liberty, was so well conceived that it satisfied the public at the time. It justified the hope of a happy union of legitimacy in the sovereign and legality in the institutions. The same king might be a Charles II in hereditary right, and a William III by his enlightened views. Peace seemed concluded between the opposing parties, the situation of courtier was left to those who were fit for it ; the Chamber of Peers was composed of the men whose families were rendered illustrious by history, and of the men of merit in the present age ; in short, the nation might hope to repair her misfortunes by turning towards an emulation in constitutional liberty that devouring activity which had consumed herself as well as Europe.

There were only two kinds of danger that could extinguish these hopes : one, if the constitutional system was not followed by an administration with energy and sincerity ; the other, if the congress of Vienna should leave Bonaparte at the island of Elba in presence of the French army. This was a sword suspended over the throne of the Bourbons. Napoleon, by contending against foreign-

ers to the last moment, had regained somewhat in the opinion of the French, and had perhaps more partisans at the time than during his lawless prosperity. It was thus necessary, for the support of the restoration, that the Bourbons, on the one hand, should triumph over the recollection of victory by pledges given to liberty ; and, on the other, that Bonaparte should not be settled within thirty leagues of his old soldiers : no greater error could be committed with regard to France.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the Aspect of France and of Paris during its first Occupation by the Allies.

IT would be altogether wrong to feel surprise at the grief experienced by the French on seeing their celebrated capital occupied in 1814 by foreign armies. The sovereigns, who became masters of it, behaved at that time with the greatest equity; but it is a cruel misfortune for a nation to have to express even gratitude to foreigners, as it is a proof that its fate depends on them. French armies had, it is true, entered more than once almost all the capitals of Europe, but none of these cities were of so great importance relatively to their respective countries as Paris relatively to France. The monuments of the fine arts, the recollections of men of genius, the splendour of society, all contributed to render Paris the central point of continental civilization. For the first time since Paris occupied such a rank in the

world, did the flag of foreigners wave on its ramparts. The dome of the Hotel of the Invalids had been lately decorated with standards, the trophies of forty battles, and now the banners of France could be displayed only under the orders of her conquerors. I have not, I believe, extenuated in this work the picture of the faults which reduced the French to this deplorable condition, but the more they suffered from them, the more they were entitled to esteem.

The best way of judging of the sentiments that actuate large masses is to consult one's own impressions: we are sure of discovering the feelings of the multitude by a reference to our own; and it is thus that men of ardent imaginations are able to foresee the popular movements with which a nation is threatened.

After ten years of exile, I landed at Calais, and I anticipated great pleasure on revisiting that beautiful France which I had so much regretted: my sensations were quite different from what I expected. The first men whom I perceived along the shore wore the Prussian uniform; they were the masters of the town, and had acquired that right by conquest: but I felt as if witnessing the

re-establishment of the feudal system, such as it is described by old historians, when the inhabitants of the country served only to cultivate the ground of which the warriors of Germany were about to reap the fruits. Oh France, France! none but a foreign tyrant would have reduced you to such a state; a French sovereign, be he who he might, would have loved you too much ever to expose you to it.

I continued my journey, my heart always afflicted by the same thoughts: on approaching Paris, Germans, Russians, Cossacks, Baskirs, presented themselves to my sight in every direction: they were encamped around the church of St. Denis, where repose the ashes of the kings of France. The discipline enjoined by their leaders prevented the soldiers from doing injury to any one, at least any other injury than that oppression of soul which it was impossible to remove. At last I entered that city in which had been spent the most happy and most brilliant days of my life;—I entered it as if I were passing through a painful dream. Was I in Germany or in Russia; Had they imitated the streets and squares of the capital of France, to revive the remembrance of them after it had ceased to exist?

In short, all was trouble in my mind; for in spite of the bitterness of my pain, I esteemed the foreigners for having cast off the yoke. I felt unqualified admiration for them at this time; but to see Paris occupied by them, the Tuileries, the Louvre, guarded by troops who had come from the frontiers of Asia, to whom our language, our history, our great men were all less known than the meanest Khan of Tartary,—this was insupportable grief. If such was the impression on *me*, who could not have returned to France under Bonaparte's sway, what must have been the feelings of those warriors, covered with wounds, and so much the prouder of their military fame, as it had for a long time constituted the only fame of France?

A few days after my arrival I wished to go to the opera; in my exile I had repeatedly figured to my recollection this daily amusement of Paris as far more graceful and brilliant than all the extraordinary theatrical performances of other countries. The performance was the ballet of *Psyche*, which for twenty years back had been regularly represented, under the greatest diversity of political circumstances. The staircase of the opera was lined with

Russian sentinels; entering the house I looked around on all sides to discover a face which I might recognize, but I perceived only foreign uniforms; hardly did a few Parisians of the middling class show themselves in the pit, that they might not lose their ancient habits; in other respects the spectators were entirely changed; the performance alone remained the same. The decorations, the music, the dancing, had lost none of their charms, and I felt myself humiliated by seeing French elegance so lavishly displayed before those sabres and mustachios, as if it had been the duty of the vanquished again to contribute to the amusement of the victors.

At the *Théâtre François* the tragedies of Racine and Voltaire were represented before foreigners more jealous of our literary fame than eager to confess it. The elevation of sentiment expressed in the tragedies of Corneille could no longer find a pedestal in France; it was no easy matter to avoid a blush on hearing them pronounced. Our comedies, in which the art of gaiety is carried so far, were amusing to our conquerors when it was no longer in our power to

enjoy them, and we were almost ashamed even of the talents of our poets when they seemed chained like us to the chariot of the victors. No officer of the French army, to their honour be it said, appeared at the theatre during the occupancy of the capital by the Allies : they walked about sorrowfully, and without uniforms, being unable to bear their military decorations since they had been unable to defend the sacred territory of which the charge had been entrusted to them. The irritation which they felt did not allow them to understand that it was their ambitious, selfish, and rash leader, who had brought them to the state they were in : reflection could not accord with the passions by which they were agitated.

The situation of the King returning with foreigners amidst that army which necessarily hated them, presented difficulties without number. *Individually, he did all that intelligence and goodness can inspire to a sovereign desirous to please ;* but he had to do with feelings of too strong a cast to be satisfied by the means employed under the old government. It was the support of the na-

tion that was requisite to regain the army ; let us examine whether the system adopted by the ministers of Louis XVIII could accomplish that object.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the constitutional Charter granted by the King in 1814.

I HAVE a pride in here reminding the reader, that the declaration signed by Louis XVIII at St. Ouen in 1814, contained almost all the articles in support of liberty proposed by M. Necker to Louis XVI in 1789, before the revolution of the 14th of July burst forth.

That declaration did not bear the date of a reign of nineteen years, in which lies the question of a divine right or a constitutional compact: the silence observed in that respect was extremely prudent, since it is clear that a representative government is irreconcilable with the doctrine of divine right. All the disputes between the English and their kings have arisen from that inconsistency. In fact, if kings are absolute masters of the people, they ought to exact taxes instead of asking for them; but if they have any thing to ask from their subjects, it necessarily follows that

they have also something to promise them. Moreover the King of France, having in 1814 reascended the throne by the aid of a foreign force, his ministers ought to have suggested the idea of a contract with the nation through the medium of its deputies; in short, the idea of any thing that could convey a guarantee, and bear evidence of the wish of Frenchmen, even had these principles not been generally recognized in France. It was much to be apprehended that the army which had taken an oath to Bonaparte, and had fought nearly twenty years under him, should regard as null the oaths required by European powers. It was thus of importance to connect and blend the French military with the French people by all possible forms of voluntary acquiescence.

What, it will be said, would you replunge us in the anarchy of primary assemblies? By no means; that which public opinion called for was an abjuration of the system on which absolute power is founded, but the public would have aimed at no chicanery with the ministry of Louis XVIII in regard to the mode of accepting the constitutional charter. All that was then required was to consider it as a contract, not as an edict of the King;

for the edict of Nantes of Henry IV was abolished by Louis XIV ; and every act which does not rest on mutual engagements can be revoked by the authority from which it emanates.

Instead of at least inviting the two Chambers to choose the commissioners who were to examine the act of constitution, the ministers caused these commissioners to be named by the King. The chambers would very probably have elected the same men ; but it is one of the errors of the ministers of the old government to be desirous of introducing the royal authority every where, while one ought to make a sparing use of this authority wherever it is not indispensably wanted. All that we can allow a nation to do, without its leading to disorder, tends to extend information, to fortify public spirit, and increase the harmony between the government and the people. ‘

On the 4th of June, 1814, the King came to the two Chambers to make a declaration of the constitutional charter. His speech was full of dignity, talent, and propriety ; but his Chancellor began by calling the constitutional charter a decree of reform (*une ordonnance de reformation*). What a fault ! Did not this imply that what was granted by

the King might be withdrawn by his successors ? Nor was this all ; in the preamble to the charter, it was said that power in all its plenitude was vested in the person of the King, but that its exercise had often been modified by the monarchs who preceded Louis XVIII, such as Louis le Gros, Philippe le Bel, Louis XI, Henry II, Charles IX, and Louis XIV. The examples were certainly ill-chosen ; for without dwelling on Louis XI and Charles IX, the ordonnance of *Louis le Gros*, in 1127, relieved the *Tiers Etat* of the towns from a state of servitude, and it is rather long since the French nation have forgotten this favour. As to Louis XIV his is not the name to be introduced when we speak of liberty.

No sooner had I heard these words, than I became apprehensive of the greatest future evils ; for such indiscreet pretensions were still more calculated to expose the throne than to threaten the rights of the nation. The latter was at that time so powerful in its interior, that nothing was to be dreaded for her ; but it was exactly because public opinion was all powerful, that people could not avoid being irritated at ministers, who thus put to hazard the protecting authority of the King, without having any real strength to support it. The charter was

preceded by the old form used in ordonnances, "We accord, we make concession and grant," (*Nous accordons, nous faisons concession et octroi, &c.*) But the mere name of charter, consecrated by the history of England, recalls the engagements which the Barons obliged King John to sign in favour of the nation and themselves. Now, in what manner could the concessions of the Crown become a fundamental law of the state, if they were nothing more than a favour from the king? Scarcely was the constitutional charter read, when the Chancellor hastened to ask the members of the two chambers to swear fidelity to it. What would then have been said of a reclamation by a deaf person, who should have got up to excuse himself from taking an oath to a constitution of which he had not heard a single article? Well! this deaf party was the French people; and it was because its representatives had acquired the habit of being dumb under Bonaparte that they desisted from any objection on the occasion. The consequence was, that many of those who, on the 4th of June, swore to obey in all respects a code of laws which they had not even had time to understand, disengaged them-

selves but too easily ten months after from a promise so lightly given.

It was curious to see convened in the presence of the King, the two assemblies, the Senate and the Legislative Body, who had so long served Bonaparte. The senators and the deputies still wore the uniform given them by Napoleon ; they made their bows turning to the rising instead of the setting sun ; but their salute was as lowly as before. The Court of the House of Bourbon was in the galleries, holding up white handkerchiefs, and calling *Vive le Roi* with all their might. The former adherents of the imperial government, the senators, marshals, and deputies, found themselves surrounded by these transports, and they had the practice of submission to such a degree that all the habitual smiles of their features served, as usual, for the admiration of power. But ought any one, who knew the human heart, to put trust in such demonstrations ? And, would it not have been better to bring together representatives freely elected by France, than men who, at that time, could be actuated only by interest, and not by opinion.

Although the charter was, in several respects,

calculated to satisfy the public wish, it still left many things to be desired. It was a new experiment, while the English constitution had stood the test of time; and when the charter of the one country is compared with the constitution of the other, every thing is in favour of England, whether we look to the people, to the grandees, or even to the King, who, in a free country, has not the power of separating himself from the general interest.

The unconstitutional part of the royalists, on whose words we are obliged incessantly to advert, because it is, above all, by words that they act, have all along repeated that, if the King had acted like Ferdinand VII; if he had re-established, purely and simply, the old form of government, he would have had nothing to dread from his enemies. But the King of Spain had the army at his disposal, while that of Louis XVIII was not attached to him: the priesthood also forms an auxiliary army to the King of Spain; in France the ascendancy of the priesthood is at an end: in short, every thing forms a contrast in the political and moral situation of the two countries; and he who endeavours to compare them, merely indulges his fancy, without at all considering

the elements of which power and public opinion are composed.

But Bonaparte, it will still be said, knew how to beguile, or to controul the spirit of opposition ! Nothing would be more fatal for any government in France, than to imitate Bonaparte. His war-like exploits were of a nature that produced a fatal illusion in regard to his despotism : still Napoleon was found unable to resist the effect of his own system, and certainly no other hand was capable of wielding that club which recoiled even on his head.

In 1814, the French appeared less difficult to govern than at any other period of the Revolution; for they were rendered passive by despotism, and they were weary of the agitation to which the restless character of their master had doomed them. But, far from putting trust in this deceitful torpor, it would have been better to entreat them, if we may say so, to consent to be free, that the nation might serve as a support to the royal authority against the army. The point should have been to substitute military enthusiasm for an interest in politics, and thus give to public spirit that aliment of which, in France, it always stands

in need. But of all yokes it was most impracticable to re-establish the ancient one; and the greatest precautions should have been taken to guard against whatever recalled it. There are yet but few Frenchmen who know thoroughly what liberty is; and Bonaparte certainly did not render them nice judges of it: but all institutions tending to injure equality produce in France the same ferment which the reintroduction of Popery caused formerly in England.

The dignity of the peerage differs as much from *noblesse* by genealogy as a constitutional monarchy from a monarchy founded on divine right; but it was a great error in the charter to keep up all titles of nobility, whether ancient or recent. After the restoration, we met in all directions with counts and barons created by Bonaparte, by the court, and sometimes even by themselves: while the peers alone ought to be considered the dignitaries of the country, that the nation might be relieved from the feudal *noblesse*, and a hereditary magistracy substituted for it, which, extending only to the eldest son, would not establish distinctions of blood and family in the country.

Does it follow from these observations that the people in France were unhappy under the first restoration? Was not justice, and even the greatest kindness displayed towards every one? Doubtless; and the French will long repent that they were not then sufficiently sensible of it. But if there are faults which justly irritate you against those who commit them, there are others which cause you disquietude for the fate of a government that you esteem; and of this description were those committed by the agents of the royal authority. The friends of liberty, the most sincerely attached to the King, wished a guarantee for the future; and their desire in that respect was just and reasonable.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the Conduct of the Ministry during the first Year of the Restoration.

SEVERAL English writers on politics advance that history shows the impossibility of getting a constitutional monarchy adopted with sincerity by a race of princes who have enjoyed unlimited authority during several centuries. The French ministry in 1814 had only one method of refuting this opinion: this was by manifesting in every thing the superior mind of the King, to a degree that might convince the public that he yielded voluntarily to the improved information of his age; because, if as a sovereign he was a loser, as an enlightened man he was a gainer. The King on his return personally produced this salutary impression on those who had opportunities of conversing with him; but several of his ministers seemed to make a point of counteracting this great advantage produced by the wisdom of the monarch.

A man, since raised to an eminent station, said, in an address to the King in the name of the department of the Lower Seine, that the Revolution had been nothing else than a twenty-five years' rebellion. By pronouncing these words, he disqualified himself from being useful in public affairs; for if this revolution be nothing else than a revolt, why consent to its operating a change in all our political institutions, a change consecrated by the constitutional charter? Consistency required that this objection should be answered by saying that the charter was a necessary evil, to which people ought to submit so long as the misfortunes of the times required. How could such a mode of thinking be calculated to inspire confidence? How could it confer any stability or any strength on an order of things nominally established? A certain party considered the constitution as a wooden dwelling, the inconveniences of which were to be borne with during the interval necessary to reconstruct the true mansion, the old government.

In public the ministers spoke of the charter with the greatest respect, particularly when they proposed measures which were destroying it by

piecemeal; but, in private, they smiled at the name of this charter, as if the rights of a nation were an admirable topic for pleasantry. What frivolity, good heavens! and this on the brink of an abyss! Is there then, in the habits of courts, something which perpetuates levity of mind even to advanced age? Gracefulness is often the result of this levity, but dearly does it cost in the serious periods of history.

The first proposition submitted to the Legislative Body was the suspension of the liberty of the press. The ministry cavilled about the words of the charter, which were as clear as possible; and the newspapers were subjected to a censorship, or official inspection. If it was thought that the newspapers could not yet be left to themselves, it was at least incumbent on the ministry, after becoming responsible for their contents, to commit the direction of these papers (now become official by the mere circumstance of the censorship) to prudent men, who would, in no case, permit the least insult to the French nation. How strange that a party evidently the weaker, weak to a high degree, as the fatal return of Bonaparte showed but too clearly! how strange that this party should

assume, towards so many millions of men, the tone of a preacher on a fast-day! How strange to declare to all that they are criminal in various ways, at various times, and that they ought, by relinquishing every claim to liberty, to expiate the evils which they caused in their efforts to obtain it! The writers of this party would, I verily believe, have permitted for one short day a representative government, had it consisted in a few deputies, robed in white, and coming, with halters round their necks, to ask pardon for France. Others, with a milder tone, said, as in the time of Bonaparte, that it was proper to preserve the interests of the Revolution, provided its principles were annihilated. This was saying nothing less than that they still felt a dread of the interests, and that they hoped to weaken them by separating them from the principles.

Is this a proper manner of treating a nation of twenty-five millions, lately the conquerors of Europe? Foreigners in spite, and perhaps even on account, of their triumph, showed much more respect to the French nation than those newspaper writers, who, in every successive government, had been the purveyors of sophistical arguments for

the stronger party. These newspapers, whose tone however was thought to be dictated by ministry, attacked all individuals, dead or alive, who had been the first to proclaim even the principles of the constitutional charter. We were obliged to hear the venerable names which have an altar in our hearts, constantly insulted by party writers without having the power of replying, without being enabled even but once to say how far these illustrious tombs were placed above their unworthy attacks, or what champions we have in Europe, and in posterity, for the support of our cause. But what can be done, when all the discussions are ordered beforehand, and when no accent of the soul can pierce through writings devoted to the cause of meanness? At one time they insinuated the advantages of banishment, or discussed the objections to personal liberty. I have heard it proposed that government should consent to the liberty of the press, on condition of being invested with the power of arbitrary imprisonment: as if it were possible for one to write when labouring under a threat of being punished, without trial, for having written!

When the partisans of despotism have recourse

to the bayonet, they act consistently; but when they employ the forms of reasoning to establish their doctrine, it is in vain that they flatter themselves with success in their deception. It is in vain to deprive a nation of information and of a free press; it becomes the more distrustful; and all the depths of Machiavelic policy are but wretched child's play, when compared to the strength, at once natural and supernatural, of complete sincerity. There are no secrets between a government and a people: they understand, they know each other. It is perfectly allowable to seek support in this or that party; but to cherish the notion of introducing, by stealth, the institutions against which public opinion is on the watch, implies a total ignorance of what the public has become in our day.

A series of resolutions tended to re-establish all things on the old footing; the constitutional charter was hemmed round in such a way as to render it eventually so different from the original whole, as to make it fall, in a manner, of itself, stifled under the pressure of etiquette and ordinances. At one time it was proposed to new model the Institute, which has been the glory of

enlightened France, and to impose anew on the French Academy the old eulogies of Cardinal de Richelieu and Louis XIV exacted for more than a century ; at another time decrees were passed for oaths to be taken in the ancient form, and without reference to the charter ; and when this excited complaints, the example of England was brought forward ; for ~~that~~ country was introduced to sanction any thing against liberty but never in favour of it. Yet it was very easy on this, as on every other occasion, to refute the explanation given to the example of England. The king of England, swearing himself to maintain the constitutional laws of the kingdom, the public functionaries take the oaths to him only. But is it worth while to begin an argument when the sole purpose of the adversaries is to find words to cloak their intentions ?

The institution of nobility, as created by Bonaparte, answered in truth no other purpose than to show the absurdity of that multitude of titles without reality, to which only puerile vanity can attach importance. In the peerage, the eldest son inherits the titles and rights of his father ; but the rest of the family returns into the class of citizens ;

and, as we have frequently repeated, they form, not a race of nobles, but a hereditary magistracy, on whom certain honours are conferred on account of the public utility of the peerage, and not in consequence of inheritance by conquest, an inheritance which constitutes feudal nobility. The titles of *noblesse*, circulated in all directions by the Chancellor of France in 1814, were necessarily injurious to the principles of political liberty. For what is meant by ennobling, except declaring that the *Tiers Etat*, in other words the nation, is made up of plebeians; that it is not honourable to be merely a citizen, and that certain meritorious individuals have acquired a title to be raised above this state of humility. Now these individuals were, in general, persons who were known to be ready to sacrifice the rights of the nation to the privileges of the *noblesse*. A value for privileges in those who possess them by right of birth has at least a certain grandeur; but what can be more servile than those members of the *Tiers Etat* who offer to serve as a footstool to those who wish to mount over their heads?

Letters of *noblesse* take date in France from the reign of Philip the Bold: their principal object

was to confer an exemption from the taxes paid exclusively by the *Tiers Etat*. But the old nobility of France never considered as their equals those who were not noble by birth; and in this they were right; for nobility loses all its empire on the imagination, whenever it does not go back to the shades of antiquity. Thus, letters of *noblesse* are equally to be rejected on the ground of aristocracy as on that of liberty. Let us attend to what is said of them by the Abbe de Velley, a very judicious historian, and acknowledged as such, not only by public opinion, but by the royal censors of his time.* “The most remarkable thing in letters of *noblesse* is, that they require at the same time a financial supply for the king, who must be indemnified for the portion of taxation of which the descendants of the new noble are relieved, and an alms for the people, who undergo a surcharge in consequence of this exemption. It belongs to the Chamber of Accounts to decide on both. The king may remit both; but he seldom remits the alms, as that regards the poor. This is the place for quoting the remark of a celebrated civilian. *This*

* Velley, vol. iii. p. 424.

abolition of plebeianship is, if the truth may be spoken, nothing more than an erasure of which the mark remains; it seems indeed rather a fiction than a truth, the prince possessing no power to reduce an entity to a non-entity. This is what makes us in France so anxious to conceal the origin of our titles of nobility, in the hope of making them appear to belong to that earliest class of gentility, or ^{immemorial} rank, which alone constituted nobility in former ages."

On reading what has been published on these topics in Europe since the discovery of printing, or that only which is quoted from ancient chronicles, we are surprised to see how ancient in every country are the principles of the friends of liberty; and in what manner just views penetrate through the superstitions of certain periods in the minds of those who have in any way given publicity to their independent reflections. We have certainly on our side the reason of every age, and this cannot be denied to form a kind of legitimacy like any other.

Religion being one of the grand springs of every government, the conduct to be held in regard to it necessarily occupied the serious attention of ministers; and the principle in the charter which it was

incumbent on them to maintain with the greatest scruple, was universal toleration. Although there still exists in the south of France some traces of that fanaticism which so long caused blood to be shed in these provinces, although the ignorance of some of the inhabitants of that country is equal to their warmth of temper, was it necessary to allow the Protestants to be insulted in the streets by sanguinary songs, announcing the assassinations which were subsequently committed? Was it not time for the purchasers of church lands to tremble when they saw the Protestants of the south marked out for massacre? Did not the peasantry, who pay neither tithe nor feudal dues, see their cause also in that of the Protestants; in short, in that of the principles of the Revolution, acknowledged by the King himself, but constantly evaded by his ministers? There are complaints, and but too just complaints in France, of a want of religion in the people; but if the intention be to make use of the clergy to reinstate the old form of government, we may be assured that the irritation thus caused will give extension to incredulity.

What, for instance, could have been contemplated by substituting, for the *fête* of Bonaparte on

the 15th of August, a procession to celebrate the vow of Louis XIII, which consecrates France to the Holy Virgin? The French nation has, it must be admitted, a tremendous share of warlike asperity to be made to go through so meek a ceremony. Courtiers follow this procession with due devotion for the sake of places, as married women perform pilgrimages that they may have children; but what good is done to France by solemnly attempting to re-introduce ancient usages which have lost their influence on the people? This is accustoming them to make a mockery of religion instead of reviving their former habits of veneration for it. To attempt restoring power to fallen superstition is to imitate Don Pedro, of Portugal, who, when he had attained the throne, brought from the tomb the remains of Inès de Castro, to have them crowned, as if such a ceremony could have made her a queen.

Yet these remarks are far from being applicable to the funeral ceremony in memory of Louis XVI, celebrated at St. Denis, on the 21st of January? No one was able to witness that spectacle without emotion. The whole heart shares in the sufferings of that princess who returned to the pa-

lace, not to enjoy its splendour, but to honour the dead, and to seek out their bleeding remains. This ceremony was, in the opinion of some, impolitic; but it excited so much sympathy that no blame could attach to it.

A free admission to all public employments is one of the principles on which the French lay the greatest stress. But, although this principle was declared sacred by the charter, the nominations made by ministers, particularly in the diplomatic department, were altogether confined to the aristocratic class. The army saw introduced into it too many general officers who had never made war but in a drawing room; and even there not always with success. In short, there was clearly no disposition but to bestow offices on the courtiers of former days, and nothing was so painful to those of the *Tiers Etat*, who were conscious of possessing talent, or desirous of exciting emulation in their sons.

The finances, that department which is felt more immediately by the people, were in some respects managed with ability; but the promise given to suppress the long list of excise duties comprised under the name of *droits reunis*, was

not fulfilled, and the popularity of the restoration suffered greatly by it.

Finally, the duty of the ministry, above all things, was to obtain, that the princes should exercise no interference in public business, unless in responsible employments. What would the English nation say if the King's sons or brothers had seats in the cabinet, voted for war or peace, in short, took a share in public business, without being subjected to the first principle of that government, responsibility, from which the King alone is exempted? The proper place for princes is the House of Peers; it is there that they ought to take the oath to observe the constitutional charter; an oath which they took only when Bonaparte was marching on Paris. Was not this an acknowledgement that they had till then neglected one great means of gaining the confidence of the people? Constitutional liberty are, for the princes of the House of Bourbon, the magic words which alone can open to them the gates of the palace of their ancestors. The art which they might employ to evade pronouncing them would be very easily detected; and these words, like the busts of Brutus and Cassius, would excite the more atten-

tion, the greater the pains that might be taken to prevent it.

There existed no common concert among ministers ; no plan recognized by the whole : the ministry of police, an institution detestable in itself, was apprized of nothing and was employed about nothing ; for if there be laws, however few, what can be done by a minister of police ? Without having recourse to the employment of spies, to arrests, in short to the whole abominable edifice of despotism founded by Bonaparte, statesmen can be at no loss to know the direction of public opinion and the true way to act in conformity to it. You must either command an army that will obey you like a machine, or derive your strength from the sentiments of the nation : the science of politics stands in need of an Archimedes to supply it with a point of support.

M. de Talleyrand, who must be allowed to possess a thorough acquaintance with the parties that have agitated France, being at the congress of Vienna, could not influence the conduct of government in domestic affairs. M. de Blacas, who had shown the most chivalrous attachment to the king in his exile, inspired the courtiers with the old jealousies of the *œil de bœuf*, (A.) which do not leave

a moment of repose to those who are thought to be in favour with the monarch; and yet M. de Blacas was, perhaps, of all those who returned with Louis XVIII. the most capable of forming an estimate of the situation of France, however new it might be to him. But what could be done by a ministry constitutional in appearance and counter revolutionary in reality : a ministry composed, in general, of men who were upright, each in his own way, but who were governed by opposite principles, although the first wish of each was to please at court? Every one said, this cannot last, although at that time the situation of every one was easy; but the want of strength, that is of a durable foundation, was productive of general disquietude. It was not arbitrary strength that was desired, for that is only a convulsion from which, sooner or later, there always results a disastrous re-action, while a government, established on the true nature of things, goes on in a course of progressive consolidation.

As people saw the danger without forming a clear idea of the remedy, some persons adopted the unfortunate notion of proposing for the ministry of war Marshal Soult, who had

lately commanded with distinction the armies of Bonaparte. He had found means to gain the heart of certain royalists by professing the doctrine of absolute power, which he had long practised. The adversaries of all constitutional principles feel in themselves much more analogy to the Bonapartists, than to the friends of liberty, because the change of the master's name is all that is wanted to make the two parties agreed. But the royalists did not perceive that this name was every thing, for despotism could not then be established with Louis XVIII, as well on account of his personal qualities, as because the army were not disposed to lend itself to such a purpose. The true party of the King should have been the immense majority of the nation, which desires a representative constitution. All connection with the Bonapartists was then to be avoided, because they could not but subvert the monarchy of the Bourbons, whether they served them with integrity, or aimed at deceiving them. The friends of liberty, on the other hand, were the natural allies among whom the King's party should have sought support; for, from the moment that the king granted a constitutional charter, he could employ with

advantage those only who professed its principles.

Marshal Soult asked for the erection of a monument for the emigrants who fell at Quiberon; he who, during twenty years, had fought for the cause adverse to theirs: it was a disavowal of all his past life, and still this abjuration was gratifying to a number of royalists. But in what consists the strength of a general from the moment that he loses the attachment of his fellow soldiers? When a man of a popular party is obliged to sacrifice his popularity, he is no longer of use to the new party that he embraces. The pertinacious royalists will always inspire more esteem than the converted Bonapartists.

The royalists thought to gain the army by appointing Marshal Soult minister at war; they were deceived: the great error of persons educated under the old government consists in attaching too much importance to leaders of every description. In our day masses are every thing, individuals comparatively nothing. If the marshals lose the confidence of the army, generals of equal ability with their superiors soon come forward; if these generals are overset in their turn, soldiers

will be found capable of replacing them. The same may be said in regard to civil administration; it is not men but systems which shake or consolidate power. Napoleon, I confess, forms an exception to this truth; but besides that his talents are extraordinary, he has farther studied, in the different circumstances in which he has been placed, to lay hold of the opinions of the moment, to seduce the passions of the people at the time he wished to enslave them.

Marshal Soult did not perceive that the army of Louis XVIII. ought to be led by principles altogether different from that of Napoleon; the plan should have been to detach it gradually from that eagerness for war, from that frenzy of conquest, by means of which so much military success had been obtained, and such cruel evils inflicted on the world. But a respect for law, a sentiment of liberty, could alone operate this change. Marshal Soult, on the contrary, believed that despotism was the secret of every thing. Too many people persuade themselves that they will be obeyed like Bonaparte, by exiling some, by removing others from office, by stamping with the foot, by knitting the eyebrows, by replying haughtily

to those who address them with respect; in short, by practising all those arts of impertinence which men in office acquire in twenty-four hours, but which they often repent during the whole of life.

The intentions of the Marshal failed from the numberless obstacles of which he had not the slightest idea. I am persuaded, that the suspicion of his acting a treacherous part is groundless. Treason among the French is, in general, nothing but the result of the momentary seduction of power; they are scarcely ever capable of combining it beforehand. But a Coblenz emigrant would not have committed so many faults in regard to the French army, if he had filled the same situation; for he would at least have avoided indiscretion towards his adversaries; while Marshal Soult struck at his former subordinates, without suspecting that since the fall of Bonaparte, there was such a thing as opinion, legislation, or, in short, the possibility of resistance. The courtiers were persuaded that Marshal Soult was a superior man, because he said that one should govern with a sceptre of iron. But where is this sceptre to be forged, when you have on your side neither army nor people? In vain do you dwell on the necessity of bringing back to

obedience, of subjecting, punishing, &c.; none of these maxims act of themselves, and you may pronounce them in the most energetic tone, without adding a particle to your power. Marshal Soult had shown great ability in the method of administering a conquered country; but France was not one, after the foreign troops were withdrawn.

CHAPTER IX.

Of the Obstacles which Government encountered during the first Year of the Restoration.

WE proceed to state the obstacles which the ministry of the restoration had to surmount in 1814, and we shall be with-held by no apprehension from expressing our opinion on the system that ought to have been followed to triumph over them ; the picture of this æra is certainly not yet foreign to the present time.

All France had been cruelly disorganised by the reign of Bonaparte. What forms the strongest charge against that reign is the evident degradation of knowledge and virtue during the fifteen years that it lasted. After Jacobinism was past, there remained a nation that had not participated in its crimes, and the revolutionary tyranny might be considered a calamity of nature, under which the people had succumbed without being debased. The army could then boast of having

fought only for the country, without aspiring to wealth, to titles, or to power. During the four years of the rule of the Directory, a trial had been made of a form of government, which was connected with grand ideas ; and if the extent of France and its habits rendered that form of government irreconcilable with general tranquillity, at least the public mind was electrified by the individual efforts which a republic always excites. But after military despotism and the civil tyranny founded on personal interest, of what virtues could we find any trace in the political parties with which the Imperial Government had surrounded itself. The mass in all orders of society, the military, peasants, men of family, men in trade, still possessed great and admirable qualities ; but those who came forward on the scene of public business, presented, with a few exceptions, a most pitiable spectacle. The day after the fall of Bonaparte there was no activity in France but at Paris, and at Paris only among a few thousand persons running after the money and offices of government, whatever that government might be.

The military were and still are the most energetic body in a country, where, for a long time,

distinction has been awarded to only one kind of virtue—bravery. But ought those warriors, who were indebted for their fame to liberty, to carry slavery among foreign nations? Ought those warriors, who had so long supported the principles of equality, on which the Revolution is founded, to exhibit themselves, if I may so speak, tattooed with orders, ribbands, and titles, which the Princes of Europe had given them that they might escape the tribute required from them? The majority of French generals, eager after aristocratic distinctions, bartered their fame, like savages, for bits of glass.

It was in vain that, after the restoration, government, while it was far too negligent of officers of the second rank, heaped favours on those of the higher class. From the time that Bonaparte's warriors wished to become courtiers, it was impossible to satisfy their vanity in that respect; for nothing can make new men belong to an ancient family, whatever title be given to them. A well-powdered general of the old government excites the ridicule of those veteran mustachios which have conquered the whole of Europe. But a chamberlain from the family of a farmer or tradesman is hardly less ridiculous in his

way. It was therefore impossible, as we have just said, to form a sincere alliance between the old and the new court; the old court indeed necessarily bore an appearance of bad faith, in endeavouring to remove, in this respect, the quick-sighted apprehensions of the *grande*s created by Bonaparte.

It was equally impossible to give Europe a second time to be parcelled out among the military, whom Europe had at last conquered; and yet they were persuaded that the restoration of the old dynasty was the only cause of the treaty of peace, which made them lose the barrier of the Rhine and the ascendancy in Italy.

The second hand Royalists, to borrow an English phrase, that is, those who, after having served Bonaparte, offered to be instrumental in introducing the same despotic principles under the restoration; these men, calculated only to inspire contempt, were fit for nothing but intrigue. They were to be dreaded, it was said, if they were left unemployed; but nothing in politicks should be more guarded against than to employ those whom we dread: for it is perfectly certain that they, discovering this feeling, will act as we act towards them,

merely by the tie of self interest, which is broken, and rightly so, by adverse fortune.

The emigrants expected indemnities from the old dynasty for the property which they had lost by remaining faithful to it, and their complaints in this respect were certainly very natural. But they should have been relieved without invalidating, in any manner, the sale of the national property, and made to comprehend what the protestants had learned under Henry IV—that although they had been the friends and defenders of their king, they ought for the good of the state to consent that the king should attach himself to the interest that was predominant in the country over which he wished to reign. But the emigrants never conceive that there are Frenchmen in France, and that these Frenchmen are to be reckoned for something, nay for a great deal.

The clergy reclaimed their former possessions, as if it were possible to dispossess five millions of proprietors in a country, even if their titles were not by this time consecrated by all laws ecclesiastical and civil. Certainly France under Bonaparte has lost almost as much in point of religion *as in point of information*. But is it necessary

that the clergy should form a political body in the state, and possess territorial wealth in order that the French people may be brought back to more religious sentiments? Moreover, when the catholic clergy exercised great power in France, it procured in the seventeenth century, the repeal of the edict of Nantes; and this same clergy in the eighteenth century opposed, down to the time of the revolution, the proposition of M. de Mallesherbes to restore the Protestants to the rights of citizens. How then could the Catholic priesthood, if re-constituted an order of the state, admit the article of the charter which proclaims religious toleration? In short, the general disposition of the nation is such that a foreign force alone could make it bear with the re-establishment of the church in its previous form: such an object would require the bayonets of Europe to remain permanently on the soil of France, and a measure of this nature would certainly not reanimate the attachment of the French to their clergy.

Under the reign of Bonaparte nothing was properly carried on but war; every thing else was wilfully and voluntarily abandoned. Reading is almost disused in the provincial part of France,

and at Paris the public hardly knows books but through the newspapers; which, such as they are, exercise a controul over thought, since it is by them only that opinions are formed. We should blush to compare England and Germany with France in regard to general information. Some distinguished men still conceal our poverty from the eyes of Europe; but the instruction of the people is neglected to a degree that threatens every kind of government. Does it follow that public education ought to be exclusively intrusted to the clergy? England, the most religious country in Europe, has never admitted such an idea. Nor is it thought of either in the catholic or protestant part of Germany. Public education is a duty of government to a people, on which the former cannot levy the tax of this or that religious opinion.

That which the clergy of France wish, that which they have always wished, is power; in general, the demands which we hear urged in the name of the public interest, may be resolved into the ambition of bodies, or of individuals. If a book be published on politics, if you have difficulty in understanding it, if it appear ambiguous, contradictory, confused, translate it by these words, "I wish to

become a minister," and all its obscurity will be explained to you. In fact the predominant party in France is that which calls for places; the others are but accidental shades at the side of this uniform colour; the nation, however, neither is nor can be of any account in this party.

In England when a ministry is changed, all who occupy places in the gift of ministers, do not imagine that they can receive places from their successors; and yet there exists but a very slight difference between the different parties in England. Tories and Whigs both desire monarchy and liberty, although they differ in the degree of their attachment to each. But in France, people thought themselves entitled to receive appointments from Louis XVIII. because they had held places under Bonaparte; and a number of persons who call themselves patriots, thought it strange that the King should not compose his council of those who had sentenced his brother to death. Incredible madness of the love of power! The first article of the rights of man in France is,—it is necessary that every Frenchman should hold a public employment.

The caste of place hunters have no idea of

living but at the public expense; neither industry, nor commerce, nor any thing which proceeds from ourselves, appears to them a suitable source of income. Bonaparte had accustomed certain men, who called themselves the nation, to be pensioned by government; and the disorder which he had introduced into the affairs of every one, as much by his gifts as by his acts of injustice, was such that at his abdication an incalculable number of persons, without any independent resource, offered themselves for places of any kind, no matter whether in the navy, the magistracy, the civil or military departments. Dignity of character, consistency of opinion, inflexibility of principle, all the qualities of a citizen, of a man of high spirit, of a friend of liberty, no longer exist in the active candidates formed by Bonaparte. They are intelligent, bold, decisive, dextrous in the chase, ardent in the pursuit of prey; but that inward conscience which renders one incapable of deceiving, of being ungrateful, of showing servility towards power, or harshness towards misfortune; all these virtues, which exist in our nature as well as in reflection, were treated as chimerical or as romantic exaggera-

tion, even by the young men of that school. Alas ! the misfortunes of France will give her back enthusiasm ; but at the time of the restoration there was scarcely any such thing as a decided wish on any point ; and the nation was with difficulty awakened from the despotism which had given to men a movement so mechanical, that even the vivacity of their action was no exercise of the will.

This then, the royalists will still repeat, was an admirable opportunity for reigning by force. But, we say it once more, the nation consented to be subservient to Bonaparte only to obtain through him the splendour of victory ; the dynasty of the Bourbons could not and ought not to make war on those who had re-established them. Were there any means of introducing slavish obedience at home, when the army was by no means attached to the throne, and when the population, being almost wholly renewed since the princes of the house of Bourbon had quitted France, princes who were known only to persons of the age of forty and upwards ?

Such were the principal elements of the restora-

tion. We shall examine particularly the spirit of society at this date, and we shall finish by a sketch of the methods which, in our opinion, could alone triumph over these various obstacles.

CHAPTER X.

*Of the Influence of Society on Political Affairs
in France.*

AMIDST the difficulties which ministers had to overcome in 1814, we must place in the first rank the influence which the conversation of the saloons exercised on the fate of France. Bonaparte had resuscitated the old habits of a court, and had joined to them, besides, all the faults of the less refined classes. The result was that a thirst of power, and the vanity that it inspires, had assumed characteristics still more strong and violent among the Bonapartists than among the emigrants. So long as there is not liberty in a country, every one aims at getting favour, because the hope of place is the only vivifying principle which gives animation to society. The continual variations in the mode of expressing one's self, the confused style of political writings, where mental reservations and flexible explanations may be turned any way; bows made and bows refused;

sallics of passion and effusions of condescension, have no other object than to obtain favour, further favour, and still additional favour. It follows that people suffer quite enough by not getting it, because it is only by means of it that they obtain the tokens of kindness in the human countenance. One must possess great loftiness of soul and steadiness of opinion to dispense with it; for even your friends make you feel the value of exclusive power, by the eagerness of their attention to those who possess it.

In England the adherents of the Opposition are often better received in society than those of the court; in France, before inviting a person to dinner, you ask if he be in the good graces of ministers; and in a time of famine, people might even go the length of refusing bread to those who happen to be out of favour at court.

The Bonapartists had enjoyed the homage of society during their reign in the same way as the royalist party that succeeded them, and nothing hurt them so much as to occupy only the second place in the very saloons where they were so lately pre-eminent. The men of the old government had, besides, that advantage over them which is con-

ferred by grace and the habit of good manners of former days. There consequently subsisted a perpetual jealousy between the old and the new men of title ; and, among the latter, stronger passions were awakened by every little circumstance to which the various pretensions gave birth.

The King had not, however, re-established the conditions requisite, under the old government, to be admitted at court ; he received, with a politeness perfectly well measured, all those who were presented to him ; but though places were too often given to those who had served Bonaparte, nothing was more difficult than to appease those vanities that had become easily alarmed. Even in society it was wished that the two parties should mingle together, and each, apparently at least, complied. The most moderate in their party were still the royalists who had returned with the King, and who had not quitted him during the whole of his exile : the Count of Blacas, the Duke of Grammont, the Duke of Castries, the Count of Vaudreuil, &c. Their conscience bearing witness that they had acted in the most honourable and disinterested manner, according to their opinion, their minds were calm and

benevolent. But those, whose virtuous indignation against the party of the Usurper was the most difficult to repress, were the *noblesse* or their adherents, who had solicited places of the Usurper during his power, and who separated from him very abruptly on the day of his fall. The enthusiasm for legitimacy of such a chamberlain of *Madame Mère*, or of such a lady-in-waiting of *Madame Sœur*, knew no bounds; and we, whom Bonaparte had proscribed during the whole course of his reign, examined ourselves to know whether we had not been his favourites, at times when a certain delicacy of mind obliged us to defend him against the invectives of those whom he had loaded with favours.

We very often perceive a kind of tempered arrogance in the aristocrats, but the Bonapartists had certainly still more of it during the days of their power; and at least the aristocrats then adhered to their ordinary weapons, a constrained air, ceremonious politeness, conversations in a low tone of voice; in short, all that a quick eye can observe, but that a spirited character disdains. It was easy to guess that the ultra-royalists did themselves violence in the civilities they showed to the

contrary party : but it cost them still more to show them to the friends of liberty than to the generals of Bonaparte : the latter obtained from them attentions, which faithful subjects always owe, in conformity with their system, to the agents of royal authority, whoever they may be.

The defenders of liberal ideas, alike adverse to the partisans of the old and new despotism, might have complained of seeing the flatterers of Bonaparte preferred to them ; those men who offered no other guarantee to their new master, but the sudden desertion of the old. But of what importance to them were the miserable disputes of society ? It is possible, however, that such motives may have excited the resentment of a certain class of persons, at least as strongly as the most essential interests. But was this a reason for replunging the world in misery by the recall of Bonaparte, and, at the same time, setting at stake the independence and liberty of the country.

In the first years of the Revolution, much may have been suffered from the *terrorism* of society, if it can be so called ; and the aristocracy made a dextrous use of its established respectability,

to declare such or such an opinion out of the pale of good company. This first-rate company exerted, in former days, an extensive jurisdiction ; some were afraid of being banished from it ; others wished to be received into it ; and the great lords and the great ladies of the old *regime* were beset with the most active pretensions for their favour. But nothing similar existed under the restoration : Bonaparte, by imitating courts in a coarse manner, had dissipated their illusions ; fifteen years of military despotism change every thing in the customs of a country. The young nobility partook of the spirit of the army ; they still retained the good manners which their parents had inculcated ; but they possessed no real information. Women feel nowhere a necessity for being superior to men ; and only a few gave themselves that trouble. There remained in Paris very few amiable people of the old government ; for persons in years had, for the most part, sunk under long misfortunes, or were soured by inveterate resentments. The conversation of new men was necessarily more interesting : they had performed an active part ; they took the lead of events ; while their adversaries could scarcely

be dragged on in their train. Foreigners sought more eagerly those who had made themselves known during the Revolution; and in this respect, at least, the self-love of the latter must have been satisfied. Moreover, the old empire of good company in France, consisted in the difficult conditions which were required to form a part of it, and in the liberty of conversation amidst select society: these two great advantages could no longer be found.

The mixture of ranks and parties had led to the adoption of the English fashion of large companies, which prevents any choice among the persons invited, and consequently diminishes much the value of the invitation. The fear inspired by the imperial government had destroyed every habit of independence in conversation; the French under that government had almost all acquired a diplomatic reserve, so that social intercourse was confined to insignificant phrases, which in no way reminded us of the daring spirit of France. There was certainly nothing to fear in 1814, under Louis XVIII; but the habit of reserve was acquired; and besides, the courtiers chose that it should be the fashion

not to talk of politics, nor treat of any serious subject: they hoped by this conduct to lead the nation back to frivolity, and consequently to submission; but the only result they obtained was that of rendering conversation insipid, and depriving themselves of every means of knowing the real opinion of individuals.

Yet this society, little attractive as it was, proved a singular object of jealousy to a great number of Bonaparte's courtiers; and with their vigorous hands, they would willingly, like Samson, have overthrown the edifice in order to make a ruin of the hall, where they were not admitted to the banquet. Generals rendered illustrious by conquest wished to be made chamberlains, and their wives ladies in waiting: a singular ambition for a warrior, who calls himself the defender of liberty! What then is this liberty? is it only the national property (*biens nationaux*), military rank, and civil employments? does it consist in the wealth and power of a few men, in preference to others? or, are the assertors of liberty charged with the noble mission of introducing into France a sentiment of justice, a sentiment of dignity in

all classes, fixed principles, and respect for knowledge and personal merit ?

It would, notwithstanding, have been better policy to have given these generals places as chamberlains, since such was their wish ; but the conquerors of Europe would really have found the life of a courtier embarrassing ; and they might well have allowed the King to live within his palace with those to whom he had been habituated, during his long years of exile. In England, who cares whether such or such a man is in the King's household ? Those who aim at such offices do not in general mix in public business ; and we have never heard that Fox or Pitt were very desirous of passing their time in such a manner. It was Napoleon alone, who could put into the heads of the soldiers of the republic all these fancies of citizen-gentleman, which made them necessarily dependant on the favour of courts. What would Dugommier, Hoche, Joubert, Dampierre, and so many others, who fell for the independence of their country, have said, if, in recompense of their victories, they had been offered a place in the household of a prince, be he who he might ? But

the men formed by Bonaparte have all the passions of the Revolution, and all the vanities of the old government. There was but one means of obtaining the sacrifice of these littlenesses—that of substituting in their stead great national interests.

Finally, the etiquette of courts in all its rigour can hardly be re-established in a country where those habits are lost. If Bonaparte had not mingled with all these things the habits of camps, he would have been insupportable. Henry IV lived familiarly with all the distinguished persons of his time; and Louis XI himself used to sup with the citizens, and to invite them to his table. The Emperor of Russia, the Archdukes of Austria, the princes of the house of Prussia, those of England, in short, all the sovereigns of Europe, live, in some respects, like private individuals. In France, on the contrary, the princes of the Royal Family scarcely ever go out of the circle of the court. Etiquette, as it existed formerly, is completely in contradiction to the manners and opinion of the age: it has the double inconveniency of giving occasion to ridicule, and yet of exciting envy. No person chooses to be excluded from any thing in France, not even from those distinctions

which are laughed at ; and there being as yet no open and public road to the service of the state, disputes are agitated on every question to which the civil code of court introductions can give rise. They hate each other for opinions on which life may depend ; but they hate each other still more on account of all those combinations of self-love which two reigns, and two orders of nobility, have created and multiplied. The French have become so difficult to satisfy, from the infinite increase in the pretensions of all classes, that a representative constitution is as necessary to deliver government from the numberless claims of individuals, as it is to preserve individuals from what is arbitrary in government.

CHAPTER XI.

Of the System which ought to have been followed in 1814, to maintain the House of Bourbon on the Throne of France.

MANY people think that if Napoleon had not returned, the Bourbons had nothing to fear. I am not of this opinion ; but such a man, it must be allowed, was an alarming pretender; and if the House of Hanover could fear Prince Edward, it was madness to leave Bonaparte in a position which invited him as it were to form audacious projects.

M. de Talleyrand, in re-assuming in the Congress of Vienna almost as much ascendancy in the affairs of Europe, as French diplomacy had exercised under Bonaparte, certainly gave great proofs of his personal address. But should the French government, after changing its nature, have interfered with the affairs of Germany? Were not all the just resentments of the German nation yet too recent to be effaced? It was then

the first duty of the King's ministers to have asked of the Congress of Vienna the removal of Bonaparte to a greater distance. Like Cato, in the Roman senate, when he repeated incessantly, "Carthage must be destroyed," the ministers of France ought to have laid aside all other interests, till Napoleon was no longer within view of France and Italy.

It was on the coast of Provence that men attached to the royal cause might have been useful to their country by preserving it from Bonaparte. The plain good sense of the Swiss peasants, led them, I remember, to foretell, in the first year of the restoration, that Bonaparte would return. Every day attempts were made in society to convince of this the persons who could make themselves heard at court; but the etiquette which prevails in France not allowing the monarch to be approached; and ministerial gravity, another inconsistency in the present times, removing to a distance from the first servants of the state those who could have told them what was going on, an improvidence without example proved the ruin of the country. But even if Bonaparte had not landed at Cannes, the system followed by the ministers, as we have endeavoured to prove, had al-

ready endangered the restoration, and left the King without any real strength in the midst of France. Let us first examine the conduct which government ought to have adopted in respect to each party, and conclude by recalling those principles which ought to guide the direction of affairs and the choice of men.

The army, it has been said, was difficult to bring round. Doubtless, were the intention to maintain an army in order to conquer Europe, and establish despotism in the interior, that army must have preferred Bonaparte as a military chief to the princes of the Bourbon family; nothing could change such a disposition. But if, while paying regularly the appointments and pensions of the military who had shed so much glory on the French name, the Court had convinced the army that it was neither feared nor wanted, since it had been determined to take a liberal and pacific policy as a guide; if, far from insinuating, in a whisper, to the officers that they would gain favour by supporting the encroachments of authority, they had been told that the constitutional government, having the people on its side, would tend to diminish the number of the troops of the

line, transforming the military into citizens, and converting a warlike spirit into civil emulation, the officers would still, perhaps have for some time regretted their former importance ; but the nation, of whom they constitute a part more than in any other army, since they are taken from all its classes, this nation, satisfied with its constitution, and relieved from the apprehension of what of all things it fears most, the return of the privileges of the *noblesse* and the clergy, would have calmed the military instead of irritating them by its disquietudes. It was useless to try to imitate Bonaparte in order to please the army ; so fruitless an attempt could bring only ridicule on those who made it ; but, by adopting a system altogether different, even directly contrary, they could have obtained that respect which arises from justice and obedience to the law : that path at least had not been trodden by Bonaparte.

In regard to the emigrants whose property was confiscated, what had been already done in 1814, might sometimes have been repeated ; an extraordinary supply might have been asked of the legislative body to acquit the personal debts of the King. And since there would have been no tri-

bute to pay to foreigners, had not Bonaparte returned, the deputies would have acceded to the wish of the monarch, and would have respected the manner in which he employed an occasional supplement to his civil list.* Let it be asked with sincerity, if, when the royalist cause seemed desperate, the emigrants had been told in England, "Louis XVIII shall ascend the throne of France, but with the condition of being limited to the powers possessed by the King of England; and you, who will return with him, shall obtain all the indemnities and favours which a monarch, according to your own wishes, can grant; but if property be restored to you, it shall be by his gift, not by your own rights; if you acquire any power it shall

* The King gave orders, in 1815, that out of this supplement the £80,000 deposited by my father in the Royal Treasury should be restored to his family, and the order was about to be executed at the time of the landing of Bonaparte. The justice of our demand could not be contested; but I do not less admire the conduct of the King, who, though regulating with the utmost economy many of his personal expenses, would not retrench those which equity required. Since the return of his Majesty, the capital of £80,000 has been paid to us by an inscription on the Great Book (transfer of stock) yielding £4,000 a year. (*Note of the Author.*)

be by your personal talents, not by the privileges of your class ;" would not they all have consented to this treaty ? Why then suffer themselves to be intoxicated by a moment of prosperity ? And if, (I take a pleasure in repeating it,) Henry IV who had been a protestant, and Sully who remained one, knew how to restrain the pretensions of their fellow soldiers, why have not the ministers of Louis XVIII also the art of governing the dangerous friends whom Louis XVI himself designated in his will as having greatly injured him by mistaken zeal ?

The existing clergy, or rather the clergy which it was wished to re-establish, was another difficulty which presented itself from the first year of the restoration. The conduct of government towards the clergy ought to be the same as towards all other classes : toleration and liberty, taking things on their actual footing. If the nation desired a rich and powerful clergy in France, it well knows how to re-establish it ; but if no one has this wish, it will only alienate more and more the French from piety, to present religion to them as a tax, and the priests as men who seek to enrich themselves at the expense of the people. The persecu-

tions which the priests suffered during the Revolution are continually cited : it was then a duty to serve them by every possible means ; but the re-establishment of the political influence of the clergy has no connexion with the just compassion which the sufferings of the priests inspired. It is the same with the *noblesse* ; their privileges ought not to be renewed as a compensation for the injustice they have suffered. Again it does not follow, because the remembrance of Louis XVI and his family awaken a deep and painful interest, that absolute power should be the necessary consolation to be offered to his descendants. This would be imitating Achilles, when he caused the sacrifice of slaves on the tomb of Patroclus.

The nation always exists ; it cannot die ; and it must on no account be deprived of the institutions which belong to it. When the horrors which have been committed in France are described, merely with the indignation which they naturally awaken, every mind is in sympathy ; but when they are made the means of exciting hatred against liberty, the tears which spontaneous regret would have caused to flow are dried up.

The great problem which ministers had to solve

in 1814, was to be studied in the history of England. They ought to have taken as a model the conduct of the House of Hanover, not that of the House of Stuart.

But, it will be asked, what marvellous effects would the English Constitution have produced in France, since the Charter which resembles it so nearly has not saved us? First, greater confidence would have been placed, even in the duration of the Charter, if it had been founded on a compact with the nation, and if the Princes of the Royal Family had not been surrounded by persons professing, for the most part, unconstitutional principles. No one dared to build on such unstable ground, and factions remained on the alert, waiting for the fall of the edifice.

It was of importance to establish local authorities in the towns and villages, to create political interests in the provinces in order to diminish the ascendancy of Paris, where people aim at getting every thing by favour. It would have been possible to revive a desire for public esteem in those individuals who had so frightfully dispensed with it, by making the suffrages of their fellow-citizens necessary to their being chosen deputies. A numerous

election for the Chamber of Representatives (six hundred deputies at least ; the English House of Commons has more ;) would have given a greater respectability to the Legislative Body, and consequently many distinguished persons would have engaged in that career. It has been acknowledged that the qualification of age, fixed at forty years, was a damp to every kind of emulation. But the ministers dreaded deliberative assemblies above every thing ; and, influenced by their old experience of the early events of the Revolution, they directed all their efforts against the freedom of speech in the Assembly. They did not perceive that, in a country intoxicated with military ardour, the freedom of debate is a protection instead of a danger, since it adds to the strength of the civil power.

To increase, as much as possible, the influence of the Chamber of Peers, there should have been no obligation to preserve all the former senators, unless they had a right to that honour by personal merit. The peerage ought to have been hereditary, and composed, with discernment, of the ancient families of France, which would have given it dignity ; and of men who had acquired an honourable name in the civil and military career. In this

manner the new nobility would have derived lustre from the old, and the old from the new ; they would thus have advanced towards that constitutional blending of classes, without which there is nothing but arrogance on one side and servility on the other.

It would also have been well not to have condemned the Chamber of Peers to deliberate in private. This was depriving it of the surest means of acquiring an ascendancy over the public mind. The Chamber of Deputies, although they had no real title to popularity, since they were not elected directly, exercised more power on public opinion than the Chamber of Peers, solely because the speakers were known and heard.

In short, the French desire the fame and the happiness attached to the English Constitution, and the experiment is well worth a trial ; but the system once adopted, it is essential that the language, the institutions, and the customs should be brought to a conformity with it. For it is with liberty as with religion ; hypocrisy in a noble cause is more revolting than its complete abjuration. No address ought to be received, no proclamation issued that did not formally remind us of the

respect due to the Constitution, as well as to the Throne. The superstition of royalty, like all other superstitions, alienates those whom the simplicity of truth would have attracted.

A public education, not under the management of religious orders, to which we cannot return, but a liberal education, the establishment of schools in all the departments for mutual instruction on the new plan; the universities, the polytechnic school, every thing which could restore the splendour of learning to France, ought to have been encouraged under the government of so enlightened a Prince as Louis XVIII. In this manner it would have been practicable to divert the public mind from military enthusiasm, and compensate to the nation for the absence of that fatal glory, which produces so much evil, whether it is gained or lost.

No arbitrary act, and we are happy in insisting on that fact, no arbitrary act was committed during the first year of the restoration. But the existence of the police, forming a ministry as under Bonaparte, was discordant with the justice and mildness of the royal government. The principal employment of the police was, as we have already stated, the inspection of the newspapers,

and the spirit of the latter was detestable. Even admitting that this inspection was necessary, the censor should at least have been chosen among the deputies and peers; but it was violating all the principles of representative government, to put into the hands of ministers themselves the direction of that public opinion by which they are to be tried, and enlightened. *Hâd the liberty of the press existed in France, I will venture to affirm that Bonaparte would never have returned;* the danger of his return would have been pointed out in such a manner as would have dispelled the illusions of obstinacy; and truth would have served as a guide, instead of producing a fatal explosion.

Finally, the choice of ministers, that is of the party from which they should have been chosen, was of all points most important to the safety of the restoration. In times when men are occupied with political debates, as they were formerly with religious quarrels, free nations can be governed only by the aid of those whose opinions are in correspondence with the opinions of the majority. I shall begin then by describing those who ought to have been excluded, before pointing out the men who ought to have been chosen.

None of the ^{men} who committed any crime in the revolution, that is, who shed innocent blood, can be in any way useful to France. They are reprobated by the public, and their own disquietude leads them into deviations of every kind. Give them repose and security; for who can say what he would have done amidst such great agitations? He who has not been able to keep his conscience and his honour clear in any struggle whatever, may still be dextrous enough to serve himself, but can never serve his country.

Among those who took an active part in the government of Napoleon, a great number of military men have virtues which do honour to France, and some administrators possess distinguished abilities, from which advantages may be derived; but the principal chiefs, the favourites of power, those who enriched themselves by servile acquiescence, those who delivered up France to that man who perhaps would have respected the nation, if he had met with any obstacle to his ambition, any greatness of soul in those by whom he was surrounded—there could be no choice more contrary to the dignity as well as safety of the crown than that of such men. If it is the system of

the Bonapartists to be always the slaves of power, if they bring their science of despotism to the foot of every throne, ought ancient virtues to be brought in alliance with their corruption? If it were intended to reject all liberty, better in that case would it have been to have gone over to the ultra royalists, who were at least sincere in their opinion, and considered absolute power as an article of faith. But is it possible to rely on the promises of men who have set aside all political scruples? They have abilities, it is said; ah! accursed be those abilities which can dispense with even one true feeling, with one just and firm act of morality! and of what utility can be the talents of those who overwhelm you when you are sinking? Let a dark speck appear on the horizon, their features lose by degrees their gracious look; they begin to reason on the faults that have been committed; they bitterly accuse their colleagues, and make gentle lamentations for their master; until, by a gradual metamorphosis, they are transformed into enemies; they who had so lately misled princes by their oriental adulation!

After having pronounced these exclusions, there remains, and a great blessing it is, there remains,

I say, no choice but that of the friends of liberty ; either they who have preserved that opinion unsullied since 1789 ; or they who, less advanced in years, follow it now, and adopt those principles in the midst of the efforts made to stifle them ; a new generation, which has arisen in these later times, and on whom our future hopes depend.

Such men are called upon to terminate the Revolution by liberty, and it is the only possible close to that sanguinary tragedy. Every effort to sail against the torrent will but overset the bark ; but let this torrent enter into channels, and all the country which it laid waste will be fertilized.

A friend of liberty in the situation of minister to the king, would respect the supreme chief of the nation, and be faithful to the constitutional monarch, in life and death ; but he would renounce those officious flatteries, which weaken belief in what is true, instead of increasing attachment. Many sovereigns in Europe are very well obeyed, without requiring to be deified. Why then in France are writers on every occasion so prodigal of this incense ? A friend of liberty would never suffer France to be insulted by any man who depended, in any degree, on govern-

ment. Do we not hear some emigrants saying, that the king alone is the state (*patrie*;) that no confidence can be placed in Frenchmen, &c.? What is the consequence of this insensate language? What is it? that France must be governed by foreign armies. What an outrage! what blasphemy! Undoubtedly those armies are now stronger than we are; but they would never have the voluntary assent of a French heart; and to whatever state Bonaparte may have reduced France, there is in a minister, who is a friend of liberty, such a dignity of character, such a love for his country, such a noble respect for the monarch and the laws, as would check all the arrogance of a military force, whoever might be its leaders. Such ministers, never committing an arbitrary act themselves, would not be in the dependence of the military; for it was much more to establish despotism than to defend the country, that the different parties courted the troops of the line. Bonaparte pretended, as in the times of barbarism, that the whole secret of social order consisted in bayonets. How, without them, will it be said, could Protestants and Catholics, Republicans and Vendéans, be made to act in con-

cert? All these elements of discord existed in England in 1688 under different names; but the invincible ascendancy of a constitution, set afloat by skilful and upright pilots, brought every thing under submission to the laws.

An assembly of deputies, really elected by the nation, exercise a majestic power, and the ministers of the monarch, if their souls were filled with the love of country and of liberty, would find every where Frenchmen ready to aid them, even without their knowledge; because, in that case, opinion and not interest would form the tie between the governors and the governed. But if you employ, and this we shall not cease to repeat, if you employ individuals, who hate free institutions, to carry them on, however upright they may be, however well resolved to adhere to their promise, a discordance will always be felt between their natural inclinations and their imperious duty.

The artists of the seventeenth century painted Louis XIV as Hercules, with a large peruke on his head: superannuated doctrines, reproduced in a popular assembly, present an equally great disparity. All that edifice of old prejudices which some seek to re-establish in France, is nothing but

a castle of cards which the first breath of wind will overset. We can calculate only on two kinds of force in this country: public opinion, which calls for liberty, and the foreign troops who obey their sovereigns; all the rest is mere trifling.

Thus whenever a minister pretends that his countrymen are not made for freedom, accept this act of humility in his quality of Frenchman, as a resignation of his place; for that minister who can deny the almost universal wish of France, knows his country too ill, to be capable of directing its affairs.

CHAPTER XII.

*What ought to have been the Conduct of the
Friends of Liberty in 1814?*

THE friends of liberty, we have already said, could alone have contributed in an efficacious manner to the establishment of constitutional monarchy in 1814; but how ought they to have acted at that period? This question, no less important than the former, deserves also to be treated. We shall discuss it frankly, since we, for our part, are persuaded that it was the duty of all good Frenchmen to defend the Restoration, and the constitutional charter.

Charles Fox, in his history of the two last kings of the house of Stuart, says, that “a restoration is commonly the most dangerous, and the worst, of all revolutions.” He was right in applying this maxim to the two reigns of Charles II and James II, whose history he was writing; he saw, on the one side, a new dynasty, which owed its crown to liberty, whilst the old dynasty thought itself de-

spoiled of its natural right, by the limitation of absolute power ; and consequently avenged itself on all those who had entertained such intentions. The principle of hereditary succession, so indispensable in general to the repose of nations, was necessarily adverse to it on this occasion. The English then did very wisely in calling to the throne the protestant branch, and without this change, their constitution would never have been established. But when the chance of hereditary succession has given you for a monarch such a man as Louis XVIII, whose serious studies and tranquil mind are in harmony with constitutional liberty ; and when, on the other hand, the chief of a new dynasty showed himself, during fifteen years, to be the most violent despot of modern times, how can such a combination in any way remind us of the judicious William III, and the sanguinary and superstitious James II ?

William III, although he owed his crown to election, often found that the manners of liberty were not very gracious, and would, if he had been able, have made himself a despot like his father-in-law. Sovereigns of ancient date think themselves, it is true, independent of the choice of the people ;

the popes, in like manner, think themselves infallible; the nobles are proud of their genealogy; every man and every class have their disputed pretensions. But what was there to fear at this time from those pretensions in France? Liberty had nothing to dread at the time of the first Restoration but the very calamity which befell it: a military commotion, bringing back a despotic chief, whose return and whose defeat served as a pretext and a motive for the introduction of foreign armies in France.

Louis XVIII possessed the true qualities of a civil ruler both in his mind and temper. In as much as it would be absurd to consider time past as the despot of the present, no less would it be desirable to add, when it can be done, the support of the one to the improvement of the other. The Upper Chamber had the advantage of inspiring some great lords with a taste for new institutions. In England the most decided enemies of arbitrary power are found among the patricians of the first rank; and it would be a great happiness for France, if the nobility would at length acquire a knowledge of, and an attachment for, free institutions. There are qualities connected with illus-

trious birth of which it would be fortunate that the state could avail itself. A people exclusively of commonalty (*bourgeois*) could with difficulty establish itself in the midst of Europe, unless it had recourse to military aristocracy, the most fatal of all to liberty.

Civil wars must end by mutual concessions, and already the great lords were observed yielding to liberty in order to please the King ; the people would have gained ground every day ; the trackers of power, who scent where it lies and throw themselves on its path, did not then cling to the extreme royalists. The army began to assume a liberal tone : this was, in truth, because it regretted the loss of its former influence in the state ; but at all events the cause of reason was benefiting from its ill-humour. We heard Bonaparte's generals endeavouring to speak of the " liberty of the press," of the " liberty of the person ;" to pronounce those phrases which they had received as a watch-word, but which they would at last have comprehended by dint of frequent repetition.

The most respectable military men lamented the defeats of the army, but they allowed the necessity of putting a stop to continual reprisals, which

would, in the course of time, destroy civilization. For if the Russians were to avenge Moscow at Paris, and the French Paris at St. Petersburg, these sanguinary marches of soldiers across Europe would annihilate all knowledge, and all the enjoyments of social life. Besides, did the first entry of foreign troops into Paris efface the numerous triumphs of the French? Were these not still present to the recollection of all Europe? Did Europe ever speak of French ~~val~~our but with respect? And was it not fair, however painful, that the French should feel, in their turn, the dangers attached to their unjust wars? In short, was that irritation, which excited some individuals to desire the overthrow of a government proposed by foreigners, a patriotic feeling? Certainly the European nations had not taken up arms to replace the Bourbons on the throne; and therefore the coalition ought not to have been attributed to the old dynasty: it was impossible to deny that the descendants of Henri IV were French; and Louis XVIII had conducted himself in the negotiation for peace as such, when, after all the concessions made before his arrival, he had been able to preserve untouched the old territory of France. It

was not then conformable to truth to say, that national pride demanded new wars; France had still a great share of glory; and if the nation had known how to reject Bonaparte and to become free, like England, never would she have seen the British flag wave a second time on her ramparts.

No confiscation, no exile, no illegal arrest, took place during ten months; what a progress was this on emerging from fifteen years of tyranny! England hardly attained this noble result thirty years after the death of Cromwell. In short, there was no doubt that in the succeeding session, a decree would have been passed for the liberty of the press. Now to this law, the first of a free state, may be applied the words of Scripture, "Let there be light, and there was light."

The chief error in the charter, which lay in the mode of election and in the condition of eligibility, was already acknowledged by all enlightened men; and changes in this respect would have been the natural consequence of the liberty of the press, because that liberty always places great truths in a conspicuous light. Genius, a talent for writing, the exercise of thought, all that the reign of bayonets had stifled, was reviving by degrees; and if

a constitutional language was held to Bonaparte, it was because people had respired for ten months under Louis XVIII.

Some vain people complained ; a few imaginations were alarmed ; a few venal writers, by talking every day to the nation of its happiness, made it doubtful of it ; but when the champions of thought had entered the lists, the French would have recognized the voice of their friends : they would have learned by what dangers national independence was threatened ; what motives they had to remain at peace abroad as at home, and to regain the esteem of Europe by the exercise of civil virtues. The monotonous recitals of war become confounded in the memory or lost in oblivion ; the political history of the free nations of antiquity is still present to every mind, and has served as a study to the world for two thousand years.

CHAPTER XIII.

Return of Bonaparte.

NO, never shall I forget the moment when I learned from one of my friends, on the morning of the 6th March, 1815, that Bonaparte had disembarked on the coast of France: I had the misfortune to foresee instantly the consequences of that event, such as they have since taken place, and I thought that the earth was about to open under my feet. For several days after the success of this man, the aid of prayer failed me entirely, and, in my trouble, it seemed to me that the Deity had withdrawn from the earth, and would no longer communicate with the beings whom he had placed there.

I suffered to the bottom of my heart from personal circumstances; but the situation of France absorbed every other thought. I said to M. de Lavalette, whom I met almost at the hour when this news was resounding around us: "There is an end of liberty, if Bonaparte triumph, and of

national independence, if he be defeated." The event has, I think, but too fully justified this sad prediction.

It was impossible to avoid an inexpressible irritation before the return, and during the progress of Bonaparte. For a month back, all those who have any acquaintance with revolutions felt the air charged with storms ; repeated notice of this was given to persons connected with government ; but many among them regarded the disquieted friends of liberty as relapsing, and as still believing in the influence of the people, in the power of revolutions. The most moderate among the aristocrats thought that public affairs regarded government only, and that it was indiscreet to interfere with them. They could not be made to understand, that to be acquainted with what is passing in a country where the spirit of liberty ferments, men in office should neglect no intelligence, be indifferent to no circumstance, and multiply their numbers by activity, instead of wrapping themselves up in a mysterious silence. The partisans of Bonaparte were a thousand times better informed on every thing than the servants of the King ; for the Bonapartists, as well as their master, were aware of

what importance every individual can be in a time of trouble. Formerly every thing depended on men in office; at present those who are out of office act more on public opinion than government itself, and have consequently a better foresight into the future.

An incessant dread had taken possession of my soul several weeks before the disembarkation of Bonaparte. In the evening, when the beautiful buildings of the town were displayed by the rays of the moon, it seemed to me that I saw my happiness and that of France, like a sick friend, whose smile is the more amiable, because he is on the eve of leaving us. When told that this terrible man was at Cannes, I shrunk before the certainty as before a poignard; but when it was no longer possible to escape that certainty, I was but too well assured that he would be at Paris in a fortnight. The royalists made a mockery of this terror; it was strange to hear them say that this event was the most fortunate thing possible, because we should then be relieved from Bonaparte, because the two chambers would feel the necessity of giving the king absolute power, as if absolute power was a thing to be given!—des-

potism, like liberty, is assumed, it is never granted. I am not sure that among the enemies of every constitution, there may not have been some who rejoiced at the convulsion which might recall foreigners and induce them to impose an absolute government on France.

Three days were passed in the inconsiderate hopes of the royalist party. At last, on the 9th of March, we were told that nothing was known of the Lyons telegraph because a cloud had prevented reading the communication. I was at no loss to understand what this cloud was. I went in the evening to the Tuileries to attend the King's levee; on seeing him, it seemed to me that, with a great deal of courage, he had an expression of sadness; and nothing was more affecting than his noble resignation at such a moment. On going out, I perceived on the walls of the apartment, the eagles of Napoleon which had not yet been removed, and they seemed to me to have re-assumed their threatening look.

In the evening, in a party, one of those young ladies who, with so many others, had contributed to the spirit of frivolity which it was attempted to oppose to the spirit of faction, as if the one

could contend against the other; one of these young ladies, I say, came up to me, and began jesting on that anxiety which I could not conceal: "*What, Madam,*" said she to me, "*can you apprehend that the French will not fight for their legitimate King against a usurper?*" How, without committing one's self, could one answer a phrase so adroitly turned? But, after twenty-five years of revolution, could we flatter ourselves that legitimacy, an idea respectable but abstract, would have more ascendancy over the soldiers than all the recollections of their long wars? In fact, none of them contended against the supernatural ascendancy of the genius of the African isles; they called for the tyrant in the name of liberty: they rejected in its name the constitutional monarch; they brought six hundred thousand foreigners into the bosom of France, to efface the humiliation of having previously seen them there during a few weeks; and this frightful day of the 1st of March, the day when Bonaparte again set foot on the soil of France, was more fertile in disasters than any epoch of history.

I will not launch out, as has been but too

much done, into declamations of every kind against Napoleon. He did what it was natural to do in endeavouring to regain the throne he had lost, and his progress from Cannes to Paris is one of the greatest conceptions of audacity that can be cited in history. But what shall we say of the enlightened men who did not see the misfortunes of France and of the world in the possibility of his return? A great general, it will be said, was wanted to avenge the reverses experienced by the French army. In that case, Bonaparte ought not to have proclaimed the treaty of Paris; for if he was unable to re-conquer the barrier of the Rhine sacrificed by that treaty, what purpose did it answer to expose that which France was possessing in peace? But, it will be answered, the secret intention of Bonaparte was to restore to France her natural barriers. But was it not clear that Europe would see through that intention, that she would form a coalition to resist it, and that, particularly at the time in question, France was unable to resist united Europe? The congress was still assembled; and although a great deal of discontent was produced by several of their resolutions, was it

possible that the nations would make choice of Bonaparte for their defender? Was it he who had oppressed them whom they could oppose to the faults of their princes? The people had been more violent than the sovereigns in the war against Bonaparte; and France, on taking him back for her ruler, necessarily brought on herself the hatred both of governments and nations. Will it be pretended that it was for the interest of liberty that they recalled the man who had, during fifteen years, shown himself most dextrous in the art of being master—a man equally violent and deceitful? People spoke of his conversion, and there were not wanting believers in this miracle: less faith certainly was required for the miracles of Mahomet. The friends of liberty have been able to see in Bonaparte only the counter revolution of despotism, and the revival of an old regime more recent, but on that account more formidable; for the nation was still completely fashioned to tyranny, and neither principles nor public virtue had had time to take root. Personal interests only, and not opinions, conspired for the return of Bonaparte, and of those mad interests which were blinded in regard to their

own danger, and accounted the fate of France as nothing.

Foreign ministers have called the French army a perjured army ; but this epithet cannot be justified. The army that abandoned James II for William III was then also perjured ; and besides the English rallied under the son-in-law and the daughter to dethrone the father, a circumstance still more cruel. Well, it will be said, be it so ; each army betrayed its duty. I do not admit even the comparison ; the French soldiers, in general under the age of forty, did not know the Bourbons, and they had fought for twenty years under the orders of Bonaparte ; could they fire on their General ? And from the moment that they refused to fire on him, would they not be prevailed on to follow him ? The men really to blame are those who, after having approximated to Louis XVIII, after obtaining favours from him, and made him promises, were capable of joining Bonaparte. The epithet, the dreadful epithet of treachery is applicable to them ; but it is cruelly unjust to address it to the French army. The governments that placed Bonaparte in a situation to return ought to take the blame of his return. For to what natural

feeling could an appeal be made to persuade soldiers that they ought to kill the general who had led them twenty times to victory? the general whom foreigners had overturned, who had fought against foreigners at the head of Frenchmen less than a year before? All the reflections which made us hate that man and love the King, were adapted neither to the soldiers nor to the subaltern officers. They had been fifteen years faithful to the Emperor; that Emperor advanced towards them without defence; he called them by their names; he spoke to them of the battles which they had gained with him; how was it possible to resist? In a few years the name of the King, the blessings of liberty, would have captivated every mind, and the soldiers would have learned from their relatives to respect the public welfare. But scarcely ten months had passed since the removal of Bonaparte, and his departure dated from an event which must necessarily put warriors in despair, the entry of foreigners into the capital of France.

But the accusers of our country will say, if the army are excusable, what shall we think of the peasantry, of the inhabitants of the towns who welcomed Bonaparte? I will make in the nation the

same distinction as in the army. Enlightened men could see nothing but a despot in Bonaparte ; but, by a concourse of very distressing circumstances, this despot was presented to the people as the defender of its rights. All the benefits acquired by the Revolution, benefits which France will never voluntarily renounce, were threatened by the continual imprudencies of the party which aims at making a conquest of Frenchmen, as if they still were Gauls; and the part of the nation which most dreaded the return of the old government thought they saw in Bonaparte the means of preserving themselves from it. The most fatal combination that could overwhelm the friends of liberty was that a despot should put himself in their ranks, be placed, as it were, at their head, and that the enemies of all liberal ideas should have a pretext for confounding popular violence with the evils of despotism, thus bringing the acts of tyranny to the charge of liberty herself.

The result of this fatal combination has been that the French have incurred the hatred of sovereigns for desiring to be free, and of nations for not knowing how to be so. Doubtless great faults must have been committed to produce such a re-

sult ; but the reproaches excited by these faults would plunge all ideas into confusion, if we did not endeavour to show that the French, like every other people, were victims of those circumstances which produce great convulsions in the order of society.

If blame is at all events to be imputed, would there then be nothing to say against those royalists who allowed the King to be taken from them without drawing a single trigger in his defence ? They ought certainly to rally under the new institutions, since it is evident that there remains to the aristocracy nothing of its former energy. It was assuredly not because the men of family were not, like all Frenchmen, of the most brilliant courage ; but because they are ruined by their confidence as soon as they become the stronger party, and by discouragement as soon as they become the weaker : their blind confidence arises from their having made a creed of politics ; and from their trusting, like Turks, to the triumph of their faith. The cause of their discouragement is, that three-fourths of the French nation being at present in favour of the representative government, the adversaries of this system, so soon as they cease to have six

hundred thousand foreign bayonets in their service, are in such a minority that they lose all hope of defending themselves. Were they willing to make a treaty with reason, they would again become what they ought to be, the support alternately of the people and of the throne.

CHAPTER XIV.

Of the Conduct of Bonaparte on his Return.

IF it was a crime to recall Bonaparte, it was silliness to wish to disguise such a man as a constitutional sovereign : from the moment that he was taken back, a military dictatorship should have been conferred on him, the conscription re-established, the people made to rise in mass so as not to be embarrassed about liberty, when national independence was at stake. Bonaparte was necessarily lowered in public opinion, when made to hold a language quite contrary to that which had been his during fifteen years. It was clear that he could not proclaim principles so different from those that he had followed when all-powerful, but because he was compelled to it by circumstances ; now what is such a man when he allows himself to be compelled ? The terror he inspired, the power resulting from that terror, no longer existed ; he was like a muzzled bear, who, though still heard to murmur, was obliged by his guides to dance as

they think proper. Instead of imposing the necessity of holding constitutional language for whole hours together on a man who had a horror of abstract ideas and legal restraints, he ought to have been in the field four days after his arrival at Paris, before the preparations of the allies were completed, and, above all, while the astonishment caused by his return still dazzled the imagination. His object should have been to excite the passions of the Italians and Poles; to promise the Spaniards to expiate his faults by restoring to them their Cortes; in short, to take liberty as a weapon, not as an incumbrance.

Quiconque est loup, agisse en loup,
C'est le plus certain de beaucoup.

Several friends of liberty, endeavouring to pass an illusion on themselves, attempted to justify their renewed connexion with Bonaparte by making him sign a free constitution; but there was no excuse for serving Bonaparte elsewhere than on the field of battle. Foreigners, once at the gates of France, should have been prevented from entering it; in that way only was the esteem of Europe herself to be regained. But it was degrading the

principles of liberty to clothe in them a *ci-devant* despot ; it was giving hypocrisy a place among the most sincere of human truths. In fact, how would Bonaparte have supported the constitution which he was made to proclaim ? When responsible ministers should have refused compliance with his will, what would he have done with them ? and if these same ministers had been severely accused by the deputies for having obeyed him, how would he have restrained an involuntary motion of his hand as a signal to his grenadiers to go a second time and drive out, at the point of the bayonet, the representatives of another power than his own ?

What ! this man would have read every morning in the newspapers, insinuations on his faults, on his errors ! Sarcasms would have approached his imperial paw, and he have withheld a blow ! He was often seen ready to reassume his true character ; and since that character was such, he could find strength only in showing it. Military Jacobinism, one of the greatest scourges of the world, was, if still practicable, the only resource of Bonaparte. On his pronouncing the words Law and Liberty, Europe became tranquil :

she felt that it was no longer her old and terrible adversary.

Another great fault that Bonaparte was made to commit, was the establishment of a House of Peers. The imitation of the English constitution, so often recommended, had at last taken hold of the minds of the French, and, as always happens, they carried the idea to an extreme; for a peerage can no more be created in a day than a dynasty; hereditary rank for the future stands in need of hereditary rank in the past. You can, doubtless, I repeat it, associate new with old names; but the colour of the past must be blended with that of the present. Now what signified that antichamber of peers in which all the courtiers of Bonaparte took their places? There were among them some very estimable men; but others could be mentioned whose sons would have desired to be spared their father's name, instead of receiving an assurance of its continuance. What elements for forming the aristocracy of a free country, such as should merit the respect of the monarch as well as of the people! A king, entitled to voluntary respect, finds his security in national liberty; but a dreaded chief, rejected by half the nation, and called in by

the other half only as an instrument of military success, why should he aim at a kind of esteem which he could never obtain? Bonaparte, in the midst of all the shackles imposed on him, was unable to display the genius which he still possessed: he suffered things to proceed, he commanded no longer. His discourse bore the stamp of a fatal presentiment, whether it was that he was thoroughly aware of the strength of his enemies, or that he was impatient of being no longer the absolute master of France. That habit of dissimulation which ever formed a part of his character, was on this occasion his ruin: he acted one more part with his accustomed facility; but his situation was too serious to allow him to get through it by artifice; and the undisguised exertion of his despotism and impetuosity could alone have given him even a momentary chance of success.

CHAPTER XV.

Of the Fall of Bonaparte.

I HAVE not yet spoken of that warrior who caused the fortune of Bonaparte to fade; of him who pursued him from Lisbon to Waterloo, like that adversary of Macbeth who was to be endowed with supernatural gifts, in order to be his conqueror. Those supernatural gifts were the most noble disinterestedness, inflexible justice, talents whose source was in the soul, and an army of free men. If any thing can console France for having seen the English in the heart of her capital, it is that she will at least have learned what liberty has made them. The military genius of Lord Wellington could not have been the work of the constitution of his country; but his moderation, the magnanimity of his conduct, the energy which he derived from his virtues—these come from the moral atmosphere of England; and what crowns the grandeur of that country and its General, is, that while on the convulsed soil of France the

exploits of Bonaparte sufficed to make him an uncontrollable despot, he by whom he was conquered, he who has not yet committed one fault, or lost one opportunity of triumph, Wellington, will be in his own country only an unparalleled citizen, but as subject to the law as the most obscure individual.

I will venture to affirm, however, that our France would not perhaps have fallen, had any other than Bonaparte been its chief. He was extremely dextrous in the art of commanding an army ; but he knew not how to rally a nation. The revolutionary government itself understood better how to awaken enthusiasm, than a man who could be admired only as an individual, never as the defender of a sentiment or an idea. The soldiers fought extremely well for Bonaparte ; but France did little for him on his return. In the first place, there was a numerous party against Bonaparte, a numerous party for the King, who did not consider it their duty to oppose foreign armies. But even if every Frenchman could have been convinced, that in any situation whatever the duty of a citizen is to defend the independence of his country, no one fights with all the energy of which he is

capable when the object is only to repel an evil, not to obtain a good. The day after a triumph over the foreign troops we were certain of being enslaved in the interior. The double power which would at once have repulsed the invader and overthrown the despot, existed no longer in a nation that had preserved only military vigour, which is by no means kindred with public spirit.

Besides, Bonaparte reaped even among his adherents the bitter fruits of the doctrine which he had sown. The only thing he had extolled was success ; chance and circumstance alone called forth his praise ; whenever there was any question of opinion, of devotedness, of patriotism, the dread he had of the spirit of liberty excited him to turn every sentiment which could lead to it into ridicule. But those are the only sentiments which form the mind to perseverance, or which attach it to the unfortunate ; those sentiments alone possess an electric power, and form an association from one extremity of a country to the other, without its being necessary even to communicate, in order to be unanimous. If we examine the various interests of the partisans of Bonaparte and of his adversaries, we shall explain forthwith the motives of their differ-

ences of opinion. In the South, as in the North, the manufacturing towns were for him, and the sea-ports against him, because the continental blockade had favoured manufactures and destroyed commerce. All the different classes of the defenders of the Revolution might, in some respects, prefer a chief whose want of legitimacy was itself a security, since it placed him in opposition to the old political doctrines; but the character of Bonaparte is so adverse to free institutions, that those among the partisans of the latter, who thought proper to connect themselves with him, did not second him with all their might, because they did not belong to him with all their heart: they had an after thought and an after hope. If, as is extremely doubtful, there still remained any means of saving France, after she had provoked Europe, it could only be in a military dictatorship, or in the republican form. But nothing was more insensate than to found a desperate resistance on a falsehood: you can never thus call forth all the man.

The same system of egotism which always governed Bonaparte induced him to aim, at whatever cost, at a great victory, instead of trying a defensive system, which would have better suited France,

especially if he had been supported by the public mind. But he arrived in Belgium, having, it is said, in his carriage, a sceptre, a robe, in short all the baubles of imperial sway ; for the only thing he understood well was that kind of pomp, mixed with a sort of charlatanism. When Napoleon returned to Paris after his lost battle, he had surely no idea of abdicating, and his intention was to demand from the two chambers supplies of men and money, in order to try another struggle. The legislature ought, in these circumstances, to have granted every thing, rather than yield to the foreign powers. But if the chambers were perhaps wrong in abandoning Bonaparte in this extremity, what shall we say of the manner in which he abandoned himself?

What ! this man, who had just convulsed Europe by his return, sends in his resignation like a mere general, and does not once attempt to resist ! There is a French army under the walls of Paris ; it is eager to fight the invaders, and he is not in the midst of it, as a chief, or as a soldier ! This army falls back behind the Loire, and he crosses the Loire to embark where his person may be in

safety, while it was his own torch that had set France in flames !

We cannot permit ourselves to accuse Bonaparte of wanting courage in these circumstances, any more than in those of the preceding year. He did not command the French army during twenty years without having shown himself worthy of his station. But there is a firmness of soul that conscience alone can give ; and Bonaparte, instead of this decisive will, which is independent of events, had a kind of superstitious faith in fortune, which did not allow him to proceed without her auspices. From the day he felt that misfortune had settled on his head, he resisted no longer ; from the day his own destiny was overthrown, he thought no more of the destiny of France. Bonaparte had confronted death with intrepidity in the field, but he did not choose to inflict it on himself ; and this resolution is not without dignity. This man has lived to give the world a moral lesson, the most striking, the most sublime, that nations have ever witnessed ; it seems as if Providence has been pleased, like a severe tragic poet, to

make the punishment of this great culprit arise out of the very crimes of his life.

Bonaparte, who, during ten years, had stirred up the world against the most free and religious country which social order in Europe has yet produced—against England, delivers himself up into her hands ; he who, during ten years, had never ceased to insult that nation, makes an appeal to her generosity ; in short, he who never spoke of laws but with contempt, who so lightly ordered arbitrary imprisonments, invokes the liberty of England, and would use it as a shield. Ah ! why did he not give that liberty to France ? Neither he nor the French would then have been exposed to the mercy of conquerors.

Whether Napoleon live or die, whether he re-appear or not on the continent of Europe, one single motive still leads me to speak of him ; it is the ardent desire that the friends of liberty should separate entirely their cause from his, and that they should be careful not to confound the principles of the Revolution with those of the imperial government. There is not, and I believe I have proved it, a counter-revolution more fatal to liberty than that which he

accomplished. If he had been of an old dynasty, he would have pursued equality with extreme animosity, under whatever form it might have presented itself: he paid his court to priests, to nobles, and to kings, in the hope of being himself accepted as a legitimate monarch. It is true that he sometimes made them the object of abuse, and that he did them harm when he saw that he could not enter into the confederation of past times; but his inclinations were aristocratical even to littleness. If the principles of liberty are destroyed in Europe, it is only because he eradicated them from the mind of nations. He seconded despotism every where, by giving it support in the hatred of the nations against France. He perverted human intellect by imposing, during fifteen years, on his pamphleteers, on obligation to write and display every system which could mislead reason and stifle knowledge. To establish liberty requires superior men in every department; Bonaparte would have men of talents only in the military line; and never, under his reign, could a reputation be founded on the management of civil business.

At the beginning of the Revolution, a crowd

of illustrious names did honour to France ; and it is one of the principal characters of an enlightened age, to possess many distinguished men, but hardly one superior to all the rest. Bonaparte subjugated the age in that respect, not because he was superior in information, but, on the contrary, because he had something of the barbarism of the middle ages. He brought from Corsica a different age, different expedients, a different character, from any thing we had in France ; and even this novelty favoured his ascendancy over the minds of men. Bonaparte is single where he reigns, and no other distinction can be compatible with his.

Different opinions may be entertained of his genius and of his qualities : there is about this man something enigmatical which prolongs curiosity. Every one represents him under different colours, and each may be right, according to the point of view from which he beholds him ; those who would concentrate his portrait in a few words, would give only a false idea of him. To attain some general result, we must pursue different ways : it is a labyrinth, but a labyrinth that has a clue—egotism. Those who knew him

personally, may have found him in domestic life possessing a kind of goodness which the world certainly never perceived. The devoted attachment of some truly generous friends is what speaks the **most** in his favour. Time will bring to light the principal traits of his character ; and those who are willing to admire every extraordinary man, have a right to think him such. But to France he never could, and never can, bring any thing but desolation.

God preserve us then from him, and for ever ! But let us beware of calling those men Bonapartists who support the principles of liberty in France ; for with much more reason might that name be given to the partisans of despotic power, to those who proclaim the political maxims of the man they proscribe : their hatred of him is only a dispute about interests ; a real love of generous sentiments forms no part of it.

CHAPTER XVI.

Of the Declaration of Rights proclaimed by the Chamber of Representatives, 5th July, 1815.

NONAPARTE signed his second abdication on the 22d of June, 1815, and on the 8th of the following month, the foreign troops entered the capital. During this very short interval, the partisans of Napoleon lost a great deal of precious time in trying to secure, against the will of the nation, the crown to his son. Besides, the Chamber of Representatives contained a number of men who would certainly not have been elected without the influence of party spirit; and yet, to make the spirit of liberty and the talent of speaking re-appear, it sufficed that, for the first time during fifteen years, six hundred Frenchmen, elected in any manner by the people, should be assembled together and deliberate in public. Men entirely new in the career of politics spoke with distinguished ability; others, who had not

been heard of during the reign of Bonaparte, resumed their early vigour, and yet, I repeat it, there were deputies in that Chamber of whom the nation, if left to itself, would never have made choice. But such is the strength of public opinion, when men feel themselves in its presence, such is the enthusiasm inspired by a forum where you are heard by all the enlightened men of Europe, that those sacred principles, obscured by long years of despotism, reappeared in less than a fortnight: and in what circumstances did they appear? When factions of all kinds were kindled in the assembly itself, and when three hundred thousand foreign soldiers were near the walls of Paris.

A *bill* of rights, for I have a pleasure on this occasion in making use of the English expression, which recalls only happy and august recollections; a bill of rights was proposed and carried in the midst of these disasters; and in the few words we are about to read, there exists an immortal power—truth. *

* The Author intended to have inserted here the Declaration of the Chamber of Representatives, retrenching whatever was not in harmony with the principles professed

I stop at this last act, which preceded, by a few days, the complete invasion of France by foreign armies : it is there that I finish my historical reflections. In fact there is no more a France, so long as foreign armies occupy our territory. Let us cast our eyes, before closing our task, towards those general ideas which have guided us throughout the course of the work ; and let us, if possible, present a picture of that England which we have so often held up as a model to the legislators of France, by censuring them every time that they departed from it.

in this work. This task is of too delicate a nature for the Editors to take on themselves to complete it.

This chapter is evidently nothing but an outline. Notes in the margin of the manuscript pointed out the principal facts of which Madame de Stael purposed treating, and the distinguished names she meant to cite.

PART VI.

CHAPTER I.

Are Frenchmen made to be Free?

FRENCHMEN are not made to be free, says a certain party composed of Frenchmen who are pleased to do the honours of the nation in such a way as to represent it as the most miserable of all human associations. What indeed is more miserable than to be incapable either of respect for justice, or of love for our country, or of energy of mind; virtues of which the whole—of which any one singly, is sufficient to render a nation worthy of liberty? Foreigners do not fail to lay hold of these expressions, and to exalt themselves in their own opinion, as if they were of a nobler race than the French. This ridiculous assertion, however, means only one thing, that

it suits certain privileged persons to be acknowledged as alone fitted to govern France with wisdom, and that the rest of the nation should be regarded as factious.

We shall examine, under a more philosophic and impartial point of view, what is meant by a "people made to be free." I would simply answer : it is a people who wish to be free ; for I do not believe that history affords one example of the will of a whole nation not being accomplished. The institutions of a country, whenever they are below the degree of knowledge diffused throughout it, tend necessarily to raise themselves to the same level. Now, since the latter years of Louis XIV down to the French Revolution, spirit and energy have belonged to individuals, while government has been on the decline. But it will be said, that the French, during the Revolution, incessantly wandered between folly and crime. If it was so, this must be attributed, I cannot too often repeat, to their former political institutions ; for it was they that had formed the nation ; and if they were of a nature to enlighten only one class of men, and deprave the mass, they were certainly good for nothing.

But the sophistry of the enemies of human reason lies in their requiring that a people should possess the virtues of liberty before they obtain liberty ; whereas it cannot acquire these virtues till after having enjoyed liberty, since the effect cannot precede the cause. The first quality of a nation that begins to be weary of exclusive and arbitrary governments is energy. Other virtues can be only the gradual result of institutions which have lasted long enough to form a public spirit.

There have been countries, like ancient Egypt, in which religion, being identified with policy, impressed a passive and stationary character on the manners and habits of men. But, in general, nations are seen to improve or to retrograde according to the nature of their government. Rome has nowise changed her climate, and yet, from the Romans to the Italians of our days, we can run through the whole scale of the modifications which men undergo by diversity of government. Doubtless, that which constitutes the dignity of a people is to know how to give itself a suitable government ; but this work may encounter great obstacles, and one of the greatest certainly is the coalition of the old states of Europe to prevent the

progress of new ideas. We must then make an impartial estimate of its difficulties and its efforts before deciding that a nation is not fit to be free ; which at bottom is a phrase devoid of meaning ; for, can there exist men to whom security, emulation, the peaceable application of their industry, and the untroubled enjoyment of the fruits of their labour are not suitable ? And if a nation was condemned by a curse of Heaven never to practise either justice or public morality, why should one part of this nation account itself exempt from the curse pronounced on the race ? If all are equally incapable of virtue, what part shall oblige the other to possess it ?

During twenty-five years, it will still be said, there has been no government founded by the Revolution, which has not shown itself mad or wicked. Be it so ; but the nation has been incessantly agitated by civil troubles, and all nations in that situation resemble each other. There exist in mankind dispositions which always re-appear when the same circumstances call them forth. But if there is not an era of the Revolution in which crime has not borne its part, neither is there one in

which great virtues have not been displayed. The love of country, the desire of securing independence at whatever cost, have been constantly manifested by the patriotic party : and if Bonaparte had not enervated public spirit by introducing a thirst for money and for honours, we should have seen miracles performed by the intrepid and persevering character of some of the men of the Revolution. Even the enemies of new institutions, the Vendéans, have exhibited the character which makes men free. They will rally under liberty when liberty shall be offered them in its true features. A keen resolution and an ardent spirit exist, and will always exist, in France. There are powerful minds among those who wish for liberty ; there are such among the young men who are coming forward, some exempt from the prejudices of their fathers, others innocent of their crimes. When all is seen, when all is known of the history of a revolution ; when the most active interests excite the most violent passions, it seems to contemporaries that nothing equal to this has stained the face of the earth. But when we recall the wars of religion in France, and the troubles of England, we

perceive, in a different form, the same party spirit, and the same crimes produced by the same passions.

It seems to me impossible to separate the necessity of the improvement of society from the desire of improving one's self; and, to make use of the title of Bossuet's work,* in a different sense from that which he gives to it, "policy is sacred" because it contains all the motives which actuate men in a mass, and approximate them to, or remove them from virtue.

We cannot, however, conceal that people have as yet acquired in France but few ideas of justice. They do not imagine that an enemy can have a right to the protection of the laws when he is conquered. But in a country where favour and want of favour have so long disposed of every thing, how should people know what principles are? The reign of courts has permitted the French to display only military virtues; a very limited class were occupied in the management of civil affairs; and the mass of the nation having nothing to do, learned nothing, and did not at all exercise itself in political virtues. One of the wonders of

* *La Politique Sacrée.*

English liberty is the number of men who occupy themselves with the interests of each town, of each province, and whose mind and character are formed by the occupations and the duties of citizens. In France, intrigue was the only field for exercising one's self, and a long time is necessary to enable us to forget that unhappy science.

The love of money, of titles, in short of all the enjoyments and all the vanities of society, re-appeared, under the reign of Bonaparte: these form the train of despotism. In the frenzy of democracy corruption at least was of no avail; and, even under Bonaparte, several warriors have remained worthy, by their disinterestedness, of the respect which foreigners have for their courage.

Without resuming here the unhappy history of our disasters, let us say it boldly, there are, in the French nation, energy, patience under misfortune, audacity in enterprize, in one word strength; and its aberrations will always be to be dreaded until free institutions convert a part of this strength into virtue. Certain common-place ideas put in circulation are often what most mislead the good sense of the public, because the majority of men receive them for truths. There is so little merit in

finding them that one is induced to think that reason alone can make them be adopted by so many persons. But in party times the same interests inspire the same assertions, without their acquiring more truth when a hundred times repeated.

The French, it is said, are frivolous, the English serious ; the French are quick, the English grave ; the former, therefore, must be governed despotically, and the latter must enjoy liberty. Certain it is that, if the English were still contending for this liberty, people would find in them a thousand defects that would stand in its way ; but the fact among them has refuted the argument. In our France troubles are apparent, while the motives of these troubles can be comprehended only by reflecting minds. The French are frivolous because they have been doomed to a kind of government which could not be supported, but by encouraging frivolity ; and as to quickness, the French possess it much more in the mind than in the temper. There exists among the English an impetuosity of a much more violent nature, and their history exemplifies it in a multitude of cases. Who could have believed, two centuries ago, that a regular govern-

ment could ever have been established among these factious islanders? The uniform opinion at that time on the continent was, that they were incapable of it. They have deposed, killed, overturned more kings, more princes, and more governments than the rest of Europe together; and yet they have at last obtained the most noble, the most brilliant, and most religious order of society that exists in the ancient hemisphere. Every country, every people, every man, is fit for liberty by their different qualities; all attain, or will attain it in their own way.

But before endeavouring to delineate the admirable monument of the moral greatness of man presented to us by England, let us cast a glance on some periods of her history similar in all respects to that of the French Revolution. People may perhaps become reconciled with the French on seeing in them the English of yesterday.

CHAPTER II.

Cursory View of the History of England.

IT is painful to me to represent the English character in a disadvantageous light, even in past times. But this generous nation will listen without pain to all that reminds it that it is to its actual political institutions, to those institutions which it is in the power of other nations to imitate, that it owes its virtues and its splendour. The puerile vanity of believing themselves a separate race is certainly not worth, in the eyes of the English, the honour of encouraging mankind by their example. No people in Europe can be put on a parallel with the English since 1688 ; there are a hundred and twenty years of social improvement between them and the Continent. True liberty, established for more than a century among a great people, has produced the results which we witness ; but in the preceding history of this people, there is more violence, more illegality, and, in some respects,

a still greater spirit of servitude than among the French.

The English always quote *Magna Charta* as the most honourable title of their ancient genealogy as free men; and, in truth, such a contract between a nation and its king is an admirable thing. So early as the year 1215, personal liberty, and the trial by jury, are there declared in terms which might be used in our days. At this same period of the middle age there was, as we have mentioned in the Introduction, a movement of liberty throughout Europe. But knowledge, and the institutions created by knowledge, not being yet diffused, there resulted nothing stable from this movement in England until 1688, that is nearly five centuries after *Magna Charta*. During all this period the charter was subject to incessant infractions. The successor of him who had signed it (Henry III, the son of John,) made war on his barons to release himself from the promises of his father. The barons had on this occasion favoured the people, that they might find support in the people against the authority of the king. Edward I, the successor of Henry III, swore eleven times to maintain the great charter, which proves that

he still oftener violated it. Neither kings nor nations observe political oaths, except when the nature of things is such as to command sovereigns and satisfy the people. William the Conqueror had dethroned Harold; the House of Lancaster, in its turn, overthrew Richard II, and the act of election which called Henry IV to the throne, was sufficiently liberal to be afterwards imitated by Lord Somers in 1688. On the accession of Henry IV, in 1399, attempts were made to renew the great Charter, and the King at last promised to respect the franchises and liberty of the nation. But the nation did not then know how to make herself respected. The war with France, the intestine wars between the Houses of York and Lancaster, gave rise to the most sanguinary scenes, and no history exhibits so many violations of individual liberty, so many executions, so many conspiracies of every kind. The result was, that in the time of the famous Warwick, "the king-maker," a law was passed, enjoining obedience to the actual sovereign, whether rightfully so or not, in order to avoid the arbitrary judicial condemnations to which changes in government necessarily gave rise.

Next came the House of Tudor, which, in the

person of Henry VII, united the rights of York and Lancaster. The nation was weary of civil war; the spirit of servitude succeeded, for a time, the spirit of faction. Henry VII, like Louis XI, and Cardinal Richelieu, subjected the nobility, and found means to establish the most complete despotism. Parliament, which has since been the sanctuary of liberty, served at that time only to sanction the most arbitrary acts by a false appearance of national consent; for there is not a better instrument of tyranny than an assembly when it is degraded. Flattery conceals itself under the appearance of the general opinion, and fear, felt in common, almost resembles courage: so much do men animate each other in an enthusiasm for power. Henry VIII was still more despotic than his father, and more lawless in his desires. The Reformation, as far as he adopted it, served him surprisingly to persecute both orthodox Catholics and sincere Protestants. He hurried on the English parliament to the most humiliating acts of servitude. It was the parliament which took charge of the processes brought against the innocent wives of Henry VIII. It was it which solicited the honour of condemning Catherine Howard, de-

claring there was no need of the royal sanction to bring a bill of impeachment against her, that they might save the King (her husband), as they said, the pain of trying her. Thomas More, one of the most noble victims of the tyranny of Henry VIII, was accused by parliament, as well as all those whose death the King desired. The two houses pronounced it a crime of high-treason not to regard the King's marriage with Anne of Cleves as legally dissolved; and parliament, stripping itself of power, decreed that the King's proclamations should have the force of law, and that in matters of faith they should be considered as having even the authority of revelation; for Henry VIII had made himself the head of the church in England, even while preserving the Catholic doctrine. It was then necessary to shake off the supremacy of Rome without exposing himself to the charge of heresy. It was at this time that the sanguinary law of the Six Articles was passed, a law which established the points of doctrine to which it was necessary to conform; the real presence; the communion in one element; the inviolability of monastic vows (notwithstanding the

abolition of convents); the utility of private mass; the celibacy of the clergy; and the necessity of auricular confession. Whoever did not admit the first point was buried as a heretic; and he who rejected the five others was put to death as a felon. Parliament thanked the King for the divine study, for the labour and the pains which his majesty had bestowed on the composition of this law.

Yet Henry VIII opened the path to the reformation of religion. It was introduced into England by his guilty amours, as *Magna Charta* had owed its existence to the crimes of John. It is thus that ages advance, proceeding unconsciously towards the object of human destiny.

Parliament, under Henry VIII, did violence to the conscience as well as to the person. It commanded, under pain of death, that the King should be considered the head of the church; and all, who refused to acknowledge this, perished martyrs to their courage. Parliaments changed the religion of England four times. They consecrated the schism of Henry VIII, and the protestantism of Edward VI; and when Queen Mary caused old men, women and children to be cast into the flames, hoping thus to please her fanatic husband;

even these atrocities were sanctioned by a parliament lately protestant.

The reformation re-appeared with Elizabeth, but the spirit of the people and of parliament was not the less servile. That queen had all the grandeur which despotism, conducted with moderation, can confer. The reign of Elizabeth in England may be compared to that of Louis XIV in France.

Elizabeth had more capacity than Louis XIV, and finding herself at the head of Protestantism, the principle of which is toleration, she could not, like the French monarch, join fanaticism to absolute power. Parliament, which had compared Henry VIII to Samson for strength, to Solomon for prudence, and to Absalom for beauty, sent its speaker to declare, on his knees, to Queen Elizabeth, that she was a divinity. But, not confining itself to these insipid servilities, it stained itself with a sanguinary flattery in seconding the criminal hatred of Elizabeth against Mary Stuart ; calling for the condemnation of her enemy, and wishing thus to remove from the Queen the shame of a measure which she desired ; but it only dishonoured itself in her train.

The first king of the house of Stuart, equally weak, but more regular in his morals than the successor of Louis XIV, professed constantly the doctrine of absolute power, without having in his character the means of supporting it. Information was spreading in all directions. The impulse given to the human mind at the beginning of the sixteenth century was diffusing itself more and more; religious reform fermented in every mind. At last burst out the revolution under Charles I.

The principal points of analogy between the revolutions of England and France are; a king brought to the scaffold by the spirit of democracy, a military chief getting possession of power and the restoration of the old dynasty. Although religious and political reform have many things in common, yet when the principle that puts men in movement is in anywise connected with what they deem their duty, they preserve more morality than when their impulse has no other motive than a desire of recovering their rights. The passion for equality was, however, so great in England, that the King's daughter, the princess of Gloucester, was put apprentice to a mantua-maker. Seve-

ral traits of this kind equally strange, might be quoted, although the management of public affairs during the revolution of England did not descend into such coarse hands as in France. The Commons, having earlier acquired importance by trade, were more enlightened. The nobility who had at all times joined the Commons against the usurpations of the throne, did not form a separate caste as among the French. The blending of occupations which does not prevent the distinction of ranks had existed for a length of time. In England the *noblesse* of the second class was classed with the Commons.* The families of peers alone

* I quote here the text of an address of the commons under James I, which is an evident demonstration of this truth.

Declaration of the house of Commons in regard to its privileges, drawn up by a committee chosen to present that address to James I.

The Commons of this realm contain not only the citizens, burgesses, and yeomanry, but also the whole inferior nobility of the kingdom, knights, squires, and gentlemen, many of which are come immediately out of the most noble families; and some others of their worth advanced to the high honour of your Majesty's privy council, and otherwise have been employed in very honourable service; in sum, the sole

were apart, while in France one knew not where to find the nation, and every one was impatient to get out of the mass, that he might enter into the privileged class. Without entering on religious discussions, it cannot be denied that the opinions of the protestants, being founded on inquiry, are more favourable to knowledge, and to the spirit of liberty, than the catholic religion, which decides every thing by authority, and considers kings equally infallible with popes, unless popes happen to be at war with kings. Lastly, and it is here that we must admit the advantages of an insular position, Cromwell conceived no projects of conquest on the Continent; he excited no anger on the part of crowned heads, who did not consider themselves threatened by the political experiments of a country that had no immediate communication with continental ground. Still less did the nations

persons of the higher nobility excepted, they contain the whole power and flower of your kingdom; first, with their bodies your wars; secondly, with their purses your treasures are upheld and supplied; thirdly, their hearts are the strength and stability of your royal seat. All these, amounting to many millions of people, are representatively present in us of the House of Commons.

take part in the quarrel; and the English had the remarkable good fortune of neither provoking foreigners, nor calling in their aid.

The English say with truth that in their last civil troubles they had nothing that bore a resemblance to the eighteen months of the reign of terror in France. But, in viewing the whole of their history, we shall find three kings deposed and put to death, Edward II, Richard II, and Henry VI; one king assassinated, Edward V; Mary of Scotland, and Charles I, perishing on the scaffold; princes of the blood royal dying a violent death; judicial assassinations in greater number than in all the rest of Europe together; along with I know not what of harsh and factious, which hardly indicated the public and private virtues of which England has afforded an example for a century past. Doubtless, it would be impossible to keep an open account of the vices and virtues of both nations; but in studying the history of England, we do not begin to see the English character, such as it rises progressively to our eyes since the foundation of liberty, except in a few men at the time of the Revolution, and under the Restoration. The era of the return of the Stuarts, and

the changes accomplished on their expulsion, again offer new proofs of the all-powerful influence of political institutions on the character of nations. Charles II and James II reigned, the one in an arbitrary, the other in a tyrannical manner; and the same acts of injustice which had sullied the history of England in earlier ages, were renewed at a period when knowledge had made a very great progress. But despotism produces in every country, and in every time, nearly the same results; it brings back darkness in the midst of day. The most noble friends of liberty, Russel and Sydney, perished under the reign of Charles II; and a number of other persons of less celebrity were, in like manner, unjustly condemned to death. Russel refused to redeem his life on condition of acknowledging that resistance to the sovereign, however despotic, is contrary to the Christian religion. Algernon Sidney said, on mounting the scaffold, " I come here to die for the good old cause, which I have cherished since my infancy." The day after his death there were found writers who attempted to ridicule these beautiful and simple words. Flattery of the basest kind, that which surrenders the rights of nations to the good pleasure

of sovereigns, was exhibited in all quarters. The university of Oxford condemned all the principles of liberty, and showed itself a thousand times less enlightened in the seventeenth century than the barons in the beginning of the thirteenth. It proclaimed that there existed no mutual contract, either express or implied, between nations and their Kings. It was a town destined to be a centre of learning that sent forth this declaration, which placed a man above all laws, divine and human, without imposing on him either duties or restraints. Locke, then a young man, was expelled from the university for having refused his adherence to these servile doctrines: so true it is that men of reflection, whatever be the object of their occupation, are always agreed in regard to the dignity of human nature.

Parliament, although very obsequious, was still an object of dread; and Louis XIV feeling, with remarkable sagacity, that a free constitution would give great strength to England, bribed not only the ministry but the King himself, to prevent the establishment of such a constitution. It was not, however, from the dread of example that he wished to see no liberty in England. France was at that

time too remote from any spirit of resistance to give him the least disquietude ; it was solely, (and the diplomatic documents prove it,) because he considered a representative government as a source of wealth and power to the English. He caused £300,000. to be offered to Charles II, if he would become a convert to the Catholic faith, and convoke no more parliaments. Charles II, and after him James II, accepted these subsidies, without venturing to adhere to all the conditions. The prime ministers, the wives of these prime ministers, received presents from the ambassador of France, on promising to render England submissive to the influence of Louis XIV. Charles II would have wished, it is said in the negotiations published by Dalrymple, to bring over French troops into England, that they might be employed against the friends of liberty. We can with difficulty persuade ourselves of the truth of these facts when we know the England of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. There were still remains of a spirit of independence among some members of parliament ; but as the liberty of the press did not support them in the public opinion, they could not oppose the strength of that opinion to the strength of govern-

ment. The law of *Habeas Corpus*, on which individual liberty is founded, was passed under Charles II, and yet there never were more violations of that liberty than under his reign, for laws without security are of no avail. Charles II made the towns surrender to him all their privileges, all their particular charters; nothing is so easy to a central authority as to overthrow each separate part in succession. The judges, to please the King, gave to the crime of high treason a greater extension than what had been fixed three centuries before, under the reign of Edward III. To this serious tyranny was joined as much corruption, as much frivolity, as Frenchmen can be reproached with at any period. The English writers, the English poets, who are now animated by the truest sentiments, and the purest virtues, were under Charles II coxcombs, sometimes melancholy, but always immoral. Rochester, Wycherly, above all, Congreve, drew pictures of human life which appear parodies on the infernal regions. In some of these pictures the sons jest on the old age of their fathers; in others, the younger brothers long for the death of their eldest brother, marriage is there treated according to the maxims of Beaumarchais; but there is no gaiety in these

saturnalia of vice ; the most corrupt men cannot laugh at the sight of a world in which even the wicked could not make their way. Fashion, which is still the weakness of the English in small matters, trifled at that time with whatever was most important in life. Charles II had over his court, and his court had over his people, the influence which the Duke of Orleans exercised in his regency over France. And when we see in English galleries the portraits of the mistresses of this King, arranged methodically together, we cannot persuade ourselves that little more than a century has yet passed since so depraved a frivolity seconded the most absolute power among Englishmen. Finally, James II, who made an open declaration of the opinions which Charles II introduced by underhand practices, reigned during three years, with a tyranny happily without moderation, since it was to his very excesses that the nation was indebted for the peaceful and wise revolution on which its liberty was founded. Hume, the historian, a Scotsman, a partisan of the Stuarts, and a defender of royal prerogative in the way in which an enlightened man can be so, has rather softened than exaggerated the crimes committed by the agents of James

II. I insert here only a few of the traits of this reign in the way they are related by Hume.

“ Such arbitrary principles had the court instilled into all its servants, that Feversham, immediately after the victory, hanged above twenty prisoners; and was proceeding in his executions, when the Bishop of Bath and Wells warned him, that these unhappy men were now by law entitled to a trial, and that their execution would be deemed a real murder. This remonstrance, however, did not stop the savage nature of Colonel Kirke, a soldier of fortune, who had long served at Tangiers, and had contracted, from his intercourse with the Moors, an inhumanity less known in European and in free countries. At his first entry into Bridgewater, he hanged nineteen prisoners, without the least inquiry into the merits of their cause. As if to make sport with death, he ordered a certain number to be executed, while he and his company should drink the King’s health, or the Queen’s, or that of Chief Justice Jefferies. Observing their feet to quiver in the agonies of death, he cried that he would give them music to their dancing, and he immediately commanded the drums to beat and the trumpets to sound. By

way of experiment, he ordered one man to be hung up three times, questioning him at each interval, whether he repented of his crime : but the man obstinately asserting that, notwithstanding the past, he still would willingly engage in the same cause, Kirke ordered him to be hung in chains. One story, commonly told of him, is memorable for the treachery, as well as barbarity, which attended it. A young maid pleaded for the life of her brother, and flung herself at Kirke's feet, armed with all the charms which beauty and innocence, bathed in tears, could bestow upon her. The tyrant was inflamed with desire, not softened into love or clemency. He promised to grant her request, provided that she, in her turn, would be equally compliant to him. The maid yielded to the conditions : but, after she had passed the night with him, the wanton savage the next morning showed her, from the window, her brother, the darling object for whom she had sacrificed her virtue, hanging on a gibbet, which he had secretly ordered to be there erected for the execution. Rage and despair and indignation took possession of her mind, and deprived her for ever of her senses. All the inhabitants of that country, in-

nocent as well as guilty, were exposed to the ravages of this barbarian. The soldiers were let loose to live at free quarters; and his own regiment, instructed by his example, and encouraged by his exhortations, distinguished themselves in a particular manner by their outrages. By way of pleasantry he used to call them *his lambs*; an appellation which was long remembered with horror in the west of England.

“ The violent Jefferies succeeded after some interval; and showed the people, that the rigours of law might equal, if not exceed, the ravages of military tyranny. This man, who wantoned in cruelty, had already given a specimen of his character in many trials where he presided; and he now set out with a savage joy, as to a full harvest of death and destruction. He began at Dorchester; and thirty rebels being arraigned, he exhorted them, but in vain, to save him, by their free confession, the trouble of trying them: And when twenty-nine were found guilty, he ordered them, as an additional punishment of their disobedience, to be led to immediate execution. Most of the other prisoners terrified with this example, pleaded guilty; and no less than two hundred and ninety-

two received sentence at Dorchester. Of these, eighty were executed. Exeter was the next stage of his cruelty; two hundred and forty-three were there tried, of whom a great number were condemned and executed. He also opened his commission at Taunton and Wells; and every where carried consternation along with him. The juries were so struck with his menaces, that they gave their verdict with precipitation; and many innocent persons, it is said, were involved with the guilty. And on the whole, besides those who were butchered by the military commanders, two hundred and fifty-one are computed to have fallen by the hand of justice. The whole country was strewed with the heads and limbs of traitors. Every village almost beheld the dead carcass of a wretched inhabitant. And all the rigours of justice, unabated by any appearance of clemency, were fully displayed to the people by the inhuman Jefferies.

“Of all the executions, during this dismal period, the most remarkable were those of Mrs. Gaunt and Lady Lisle, who had been accused of harbouring traitors. Mrs. Gaunt was an anabaptist, noted for her beneficence, which she extended to

persons of all professions and persuasions. One of the rebels, knowing her humane disposition, had recourse to her in his distress, and was concealed by her. Hearing of the proclamation, which offered an indemnity and rewards to such as discovered criminals, he betrayed his benefactress, and bore evidence against her. He received a pardon as a recompence for his treachery ; she was burned alive for her charity.

“ Lady Lisle was widow of one of the regicides who had enjoyed great favour and authority under Cromwell, and who having fled, after the restoration, to Lausanne in Switzerland, was there assassinated by three Irish ruffians, who hoped to make their fortune by this piece of service. His widow was now prosecuted for harbouring two rebels the day after the battle of Sedgemoor ; and Jefferies pushed on the trial with an unrelenting violence. In vain did the aged prisoner plead, that these criminals had been put into no proclamation ; had been convicted by no verdict ; nor could any man be denominated a traitor, till the sentence of some legal court was passed upon him : That it appeared not by any proof, that she was so much as acquainted with the guilt of the persons, or had

heard of their joining the rebellion of Monmouth : That though she might be obnoxious on account of her family, it was well known, that her heart was ever loyal, and that no person in England had shed more tears for that tragical event, in which her husband had unfortunately borne too great a share : and that the same principles, which she herself had ever embraced, she had carefully instilled into her son, and had, at that very time, sent him to fight against those rebels whom she was now accused of harbouring. Though these arguments did not move Jefferies, they had influence on the jury. Twice they seemed inclined to bring in a favourable verdict ; they were as often sent back with menaces and reproaches ; and at last were constrained to give sentence against the prisoner. Notwithstanding all applications for pardon, the cruel sentence was executed. The King said, that he had given Jefferies a promise not to pardon her.

“ Even those multitudes, who received pardon, were obliged to atone for their guilty by fines, which reduced them to beggary ; or, where their former poverty made them incapable of paying, they were condemned to cruel whippings or severe imprison-

ments. - - - - The people might have been willing on this occasion to distinguish between the King and his ministers; but care was taken to prove, that the latter had done nothing but what was agreeable to their master. Jefferies, on his return, was immediately, for those eminent services, created a peer; and was soon after vested with the dignity of chancellor."

Such were the sufferings which a king had it in his power to impose on Englishmen, and such was the treatment which they supported. It was in 1686 that England exhibited to Europe such examples of barbarity and servility; and two years after, when James II was deposed and the constitution established, began that period of one hundred and twenty eight years down to our days, in which a single session of parliament has not passed without adding some improvement to the state of society.

James II was highly culpable; yet we cannot deny that there was treason in the manner in which he was abandoned. His daughters deprived him of the crown. The persons who had professed the greatest attachment to him, and who owed him the greatest gratitude, forsook him,

The officers broke their oath; but success having, according to an English epigram, excused this treason, it no longer bore the name.*

William III was a statesman possessed of firmness and sagacity, accustomed, by his situation of Stadtholder in Holland, to respect liberty, whether he naturally liked it or not. Queen Anne, who succeeded him, was a woman without talents, and with no strong attachments but to prejudices. Although in possession of a throne which, according to the principles of legitimacy, she ought to have relinquished to her brother, she preserved a predilection for the doctrine of divine right; and although the party of the friends of liberty had made her queen, she always felt an involuntary disinclination to them. Yet political institutions were by this time acquiring so much strength, that, abroad as at home, this reign was one of the most glorious in the annals of England. The house of Hanover completed the securities of religious and political reform; yet, till after the battle of Culoden, in 1746, the spirit of faction often got the

* Treason does never prosper: what's the reason?

Why, when it prospers, none dare call it treason.

better of the spirit of justice. A price of 30,000*l.* was put on the head of Prince Edward, and, much as people feared for liberty, they had difficulty in resolving on the only manner of establishing it, that is, on respecting principles, whatever be the circumstances of the moment.

But if we read with care the reign of the three Georges, we shall see that, during that period, morality and liberty have been in a course of uninterrupted advancement. What a beautiful spectacle is this constitution, unsteady on leaving its harbour, like a vessel launched into the sea, and at last spreading wide its sails and giving a spring to all that is great and generous in the human mind! The English, I know, will assert that they have at all times had a stronger spirit of liberty than the French; that from the time of Cæsar they repelled the Roman yoke; and that the code of these Romans, composed under the emperors, was never introduced into the English laws: it is equally true that by adopting the Reformation, the English founded at once morality and liberty on a firmer basis. The clergy, having always sat in parliament along with the lay lords, had no distinct power in the state, and the English nobility showed

themselves more factious, but less of courtiers, than the nobility of France. These differences are, it cannot be denied, to the advantage of England. In France, the beauty of the climate, the relish for society, all that embellishes life, operated in favour of arbitrary power, as in the countries of the south, in which the pleasures of existence are sufficient for man. But as soon as the call for liberty takes possession of the mind, even the defects with which the French are reproached, their vivacity, their self-love, attach them more to what they have determined to conquer. They are the third people, reckoning the Americans, who are making the trial of a representative government, and the example of their predecessors begins at last to guide them. In whatever way we consider each nation, we find in it always that which will render a representative government not only possible, but necessary. Let us then examine the influence of that government in the country which had first the glory of establishing it. .

CHAPTER III.

Of the Prosperity of England, and the Causes by which it has been hitherto promoted.

IN the year 1813, the English had been twenty-one years at war with France, and for some time the whole Continent had been in arms against them. Even America, from political circumstances foreign to the interests of Europe, made a part of this universal coalition. During several years the respectable monarch of Great Britain was no longer in possession of his intellectual faculties. The great men in the civil career, Pitt and Fox, were now no more, and no one had yet succeeded to their reputation. No historical name could be cited at the head of affairs, and Wellington alone attracted the attention of Europe. Some ministers, several members of the Opposition, lawyers, men of science and literature, enjoyed a great share of the public esteem, and if, on the one hand, France,

in bending beneath the yoke of one man, had seen the reputation of individuals disappear; on the other, there was so much ability, information, and merit among the English, that it had become very difficult to take the first rank amidst this illustrious crowd.

On my arrival in England, no particular person was present to my thoughts: I knew scarcely any one in that country; but I went there with confidence. I was persecuted by an enemy of liberty, and therefore believed myself sure of an honourable sympathy in a country where every institution was in harmony with my political sentiments. I reckoned also greatly on my father's memory as a protection, and I was not deceived. The billows of the North Sea, which I crossed in going from Sweden, still filled me with dread, when I perceived at a distance the verdant isle that had alone resisted the subjugation of Europe. Yet it contained only a population of twelve millions; for the five or six additional millions which compose the population of Ireland, had often, during the course of the last war, been a prey to intestine divisions. Those who will not acknowledge the ascendancy of liberty in the power of England are perpetually

repeating that the English would have been vanquished by Bonaparte, like every continental nation, if they had not been protected by the sea. This opinion cannot be refuted by experience ; but I have no doubt that if, by a stroke of the Leviathan, Great Britain had been joined to the European continent, she would indeed have suffered more ; her wealth would, no doubt, have been diminished ; but the public spirit of a free nation is such, that it would never have submitted to the yoke of foreigners.

When I landed in England, in the month of June, 1813, intelligence had just arrived of the armistice concluded between the Allied Powers and Napoleon. He was at Dresden, and it was still in his power to reduce himself to the miserable lot of being Emperor of France as far as the Rhine, and King of Italy. It was probable that England would not subscribe to this treaty ; her position was therefore far from being favourable. A long war menaced her anew ; her finances appeared exhausted ; at least if we were to judge of her resources according to those of every other country of the world. The bank-note, serving instead of coin, had fallen one-fourth on the Continent ; and if this

paper had not been supported by the patriotic spirit of the nation, it would have involved the ruin of public and private affairs. The French newspapers, comparing the state of the finances of the two countries, always represented England as overwhelmed with debt, and France as mistress of considerable treasure. The comparison was true ; but it was necessary to add, that England had the disposal of unbounded resources by her credit, while the French Government possessed only the gold, which it held in its hands. France could levy millions in contributions on oppressed Europe ; but her despotic Sovereign could not have succeeded in a voluntary loan.

From Harwich to London you travel by a high road of nearly seventy miles, which is bordered, almost without interruption, by country houses on both sides ; it is a succession of habitations with gardens, interrupted by towns ; almost all the people are well clad ; scarcely a cottage is in decay, and even the animals have something peaceful and comfortable about them, as if there were rights for them also in this great edifice of social order. The price of every thing is necessarily very high ; but these prices are for the most part fixed : there is

such an aversion in that country to what is arbitrary, that when there is no positive law, there is first a rule, and next a custom, to secure, as far as possible, something positive and fixed, even in the smallest details. The dearness of provisions, occasioned by enormous taxes, is, no doubt, a great evil; but if the war was indispensable, what other than this nation, that is this constitution, could have sufficed for its expenses? Montesquieu is right in remarking, that free countries pay far more taxes than those which are governed despotically: but we have not yet ascertained, though the example of England might have taught us, the extent of the riches of a people who consent to what they give, and consider public affairs as their own. Thus the English nation, far from having lost by twenty years of war, gained in every respect, even in the midst of the Continental blockade. Industry, become more active and ingenious, made up in an astonishing manner for the want of those productions which could no longer be drawn from the Continent. Capitals, excluded from commerce, were employed in the cultivation of waste lands, and in agricultural improvements in various counties. The number of houses was every where increased, and

the extension of London, within a few years, is scarcely credible. If one branch of commerce fell, another arose forthwith. Men whose property was increased by the rise of land appropriated a large portion of their revenue to establishments of public charity. When the Emperor Alexander arrived in England, surrounded by the multitude, who felt so natural an eagerness to see him, he inquired where the lower orders were, because he found himself surrounded only by men, dressed like the better class in other countries. The extent of what is done in England by private subscription is enormous: hospitals, houses of education, missions, Christian societies, were not only supported but multiplied during the war; and foreign countries who felt its disasters, the Swiss, the Germans, and the Dutch, were perpetually receiving from England private aid, the produce of voluntary gifts. When the town of Leyden was almost half destroyed by the explosion of a vessel laden with gunpowder, the English flag was soon after seen to appear on the coast of Holland; and as the Continental blockade existed at that time in all its rigour, the people on the coast thought themselves obliged to fire on this perfidious vessel: she then hoisted a

flag of truce, and made known that she brought a considerable sum for the people of Leyden, ruined by their recent misfortune.

But to what are we to attribute all these wonders of a generous prosperity? to liberty; that is to the confidence of the nation in a government which makes the first principle of its finances consist in publicity; in a government enlightened by discussion, and by the liberty of the press. The nation, which cannot be deceived under such a state of things, knows the use of the taxes which it pays, and public credit supports the amazing weight of the English debt. If, without departing from proportions, any thing similar were tried in the governments of the European continent that are not representative, not a second step could be made in such an enterprise. Five hundred thousand proprietors of public stock form a great guarantee for the payment of the debt, in a country where the opinion and interest of every man possess influence. Justice, which in matters of credit is synonymous with ability, is carried so far in England that the dividends due to French proprietors were not confiscated there, even when all English property was seized in France. The foreign stockholder was

not even made to pay an income tax on his dividends, though that tax was paid by the English themselves. This complete good faith, the perfection of policy, is the basis of the finances of England ; and the confidence in the duration of this good faith is connected with political institutions. A change in the ministry, whatever it may be, occasions no prejudice to credit, since the national representation and publicity render all dissimulation impracticable. Capitalists who lend their money are of all people in the world the most difficult to deceive.

There still exist old laws in England which cause some obstacles to different enterprises of industry in the interior ; but some are progressively abolished, and others are fallen into disuse. Thus every one creates resources for himself, and no man, endowed with any activity, can be in England without finding the means of acquiring property by doing that which contributes to the good of the state. The government never interferes in what can be equally well done by individuals : respect for personal liberty extends to the exercise of the faculties of every man : and the nation is so jealous of managing its own concerns, wherever

that is practicable, that in several respects there is wanting in London a police necessary to the comfort of the town, because the ministers cannot encroach on the local authorities.

Political security, without which there can be neither credit, nor accumulated capital, is not however sufficient to bring forth all the resources of a nation; men must be excited to labour by emulation, while the law secures to them the fruits of labour. Commerce and industry must be honoured, not by recompenses bestowed on such or such an individual, which supposes two classes in a country, one of which believes it has the right to pay the other: but by an order of things which allows each man to reach the highest rank, if he become deserving of it. Hume says "that commerce stands still more in need of dignity, than of liberty;" and indeed, the absurd prejudice which forbade the French *noblesse* to engage in business, was more prejudicial than all the other abuses of the old *regime*, to the progress of wealth in France. Peerages have been recently given in England to merchants of the first class: when once made peers, they do not remain in business, because it is understood that they should

serve their country in another manner. But it is their functions as public men, and not the prejudices of a caste, which removes them from the occupations of trade, into which the younger sons of the greatest families, when called on by circumstances, enter without hesitation. The same family is often connected with peers on one side, and, on the other, with the plainest merchants of a provincial town. This political order stimulates all the faculties of the individual, because there are no bounds to the advantages which riches and talent may attain ; and because no exclusion withholds either alliances, or employment, or society, or titles, from the last of English citizens, if he is worthy of being the first.

But it will be said that in France, even under the old government, individuals without high birth were named to the greatest places. Yes ; they were sometimes employed where they were useful to the state ; but a citizen could in no case be made the equal of a man of family. How was it possible to give decorations of the first order to a man of talents, without high birth, when genealogical titles were requisite to have the right of wearing them ? Have we ever seen the title of

Duke and Peer conferred on one^r who could have been called an upstart (*parvenu*)² and was not this word *parvenu* in itself an offence : Even the members of the French parliament could never, as we have already stated, cause themselves to be considered the equals of the military nobility. In England rank and equality are combined in the manner most favourable to the prosperity of the state, and the happiness of the nation is the object of all social distinctions. There, as every where else, historical names inspire that respect of which a grateful imagination cannot refuse the tribute ; but the titles remaining the same, though passing from one family to another, there results from this a salutary ignorance in the minds of the people, which leads them to pay the same respect to the same titles, whatever may be the family name to which they are attached. The great Marlborough was called Churchill, and was certainly not of so noble an origin as the ancient house of Spencer, to which the present Duke of Marlborough belongs ; but, without speaking of the memory of a great man, which would have sufficed to honour his descendants, the people of the better classes only know that the Duke of Marlborough

of our days is of more illustrious descent than the famous General, and the respect in which he is held by the mass of the nation neither gains nor loses from that circumstance. The duke of Northumberland, on the contrary, descends, by the female branch only, from the famous Percy Hotspur; and, nevertheless, he is considered by every body as the true heir of that house. People exclaim against the regularity of ceremonials in England; the seniority of a single day, in point of nomination to the peerage, gives one peer precedence of another named some hours later. The wife and daughter share the advantages of the husband or father; but it is precisely this regularity of ranks which prevents mortification to vanity; for it may happen that the last created peer is of a nobler birth than he by whom he is preceded; he may at least think so; and every one takes his share of self love, without injuring the public.

The nobility of France, on the contrary, could be classed only by the genealogist of the court. His decisions, founded on parchments, were without appeal; and thus, whilst the English aristocracy is the hope of all, since every person can attain it, French aristocracy was necessarily the

despair of all, since it was impossible for an individual to obtain, by the efforts of his whole life, that which chance had refused him. It is not the *inglorious order* of birth, said an English poet to William III, which has raised you to the throne, but genius and virtue.

In England they have made respect for ancestry serve to form a class which gives the power of flattering men of talents, by associating them with it. In fact, we cannot too often ask, what folly can be greater than that of arranging political associations in such a way, as may lead a celebrated man to regret that he is not his own grandson; for, once ennobled, his descendants of the third generation obtained by his merit privileges that could not be granted to himself. Thus in France all persons were eager to quit trade, and even the law, whenever they had money enough to purchase a title. Hence it happened that no career, except that of arms, was ever carried as far as it might have been; and it has thus been impossible to judge how far the prosperity of France would extend, if it enjoyed in peace the advantages of a free constitution.

All classes of respectable individuals are ac-

customed to meet in England in different committees, when engaged in any public undertaking, in any act of charity, supported by voluntary subscriptions. Publicity in business is a principle so generally admitted, that though the English are by nature the most reserved of men, and the most averse to speak in company, there are always seats for spectators in the halls where the committees meet, and an elevation from which the speakers address the assembly.

I was present at one of these discussions, in which motives calculated to excite the generosity of the hearers were urged with much energy. The question was relieving by subscription the inhabitants of Leipsic, after the battle fought under the walls of that city. The first who spoke was the Duke of York, the King's second son, and the first person in the kingdom after the Prince Regent, a man of ability, and much esteemed in the direction of his department; but who has neither the habit of, nor a taste for, speaking in public. He, however, conquered his natural timidity, because he was thus hopeful of giving useful encouragement. Courtiers in an absolute monarchy would not have failed to insinuate to a King's son, first, that he

ought not to do any thing which cost him trouble ; and, secondly, that he was wrong to commit himself by haranguing the public in the midst of merchants, his colleagues in speaking. This idea never entered the Duke of York's mind, nor that of any Englishman, whatever might be his opinion. After the Duke of York, the Duke of Sussex, the King's fifth son, who expresses himself with great ease and elegance, spoke in his turn ; and the man the most respected and esteemed in all England, Mr. Wilberforce, could scarcely make himself heard, so much was his voice drowned in acclamations. Obscure citizens, holding no rank in society but from their fortune, or their zeal for humanity, succeeded these illustrious names ; every one, according to his powers, insisted on the honourable necessity in which England was placed, of succouring those of her allies who had suffered more than herself in the common contest. The auditors subscribed before their departure, and considerable sums were the result of this meeting. It is thus that are formed the ties which strengthen the unity of the nation ; and it is thus that social order is founded on reason and humanity.

These respectable assemblies do not merely aim

at encouraging acts of humanity ; some of them serve particularly to consolidate the union between the great nobility and the commercial class, between the nation and the government ; and these are the most solemn.

London has always had a Lord Mayor, who presides during a year in the council of the city, and whose administrative powers are very extensive. They are very careful in England not to concentrate every thing in ministerial authority ; they choose that in every county, in every town, local interests should be placed in the hands of men chosen by the people to manage them. The Lord Mayor is usually a merchant in the city, and not always a great merchant ; but often a trader in whom a great many individuals may see their equal. The Lady Mayoress, for it is thus the Mayor's wife is called, enjoys, during a year, all the honours attached to the most distinguished ranks of the state. The election of the people, and the power of a great city, are honoured in the man by whom they are represented. The Lord Mayor gives two grand official dinners, to which he invites English of all classes, and foreigners. I have seen at his table sons of the King, several of the ministers,

ambassadors of foreign powers, the Marquis of Lansdowne, the Duke of Devonshire, as well as gentlemen of the highest respectability on various accounts: some sons of peers; others, members of the House of Commons; merchants, lawyers, literary men, all English citizens, all equally attached to their noble country. Two of the King's ministers rose from table to address the company; for while on the Continent a minister confines himself, even in the midst of select society, to the most insignificant phrases, the heads of government in England always consider themselves as representatives of the people, and endeavour to win its approbation with as much solicitude as the members of the opposition; for the dignity of the English nation soars above every office, and every title. Various toasts, of which the objects were political interests, were given according to custom: sovereigns and nations, glory and independence, were celebrated, and there at least the English showed themselves the friends of the liberty of the world. In fact, a free nation may have an exclusive spirit in regard to the advantages of trade or power; but it ought to associate itself in every country with the rights of mankind.

This assemblage took place in an ancient edifice in the city, whose gothic vaults have witnessed the most sanguinary struggles: tranquillity has reigned in England only in conjunction with liberty. The official dress of all the members of the Common Council is the same as it was several centuries ago. Some customs of that period are likewise preserved, and the imagination is affected by them; but this is because the recollections of former ages do not recall odious prejudices. Whatever is gothic in the habits, and even in some of the institutions of England, seems a ceremony of the worship of the age; but neither the progress of knowledge nor the improvement of the laws suffer from it in any respect.

We cannot believe that Providence has placed this fine monument of social order so near to France, merely to give us the pain of never being able to equal it; and we shall examine with attention that which we should wish to imitate with energy.

CHAPTER IV.

Of Liberty and Public Spirit among the English.

THE first basis of all liberty is individual security ; and nothing is more admirable than English legislation in this respect, A criminal suit is in every country a horrible spectacle. In England the excellence of the procedure, the humanity of the judges, the precautions of every kind taken to secure the life of the innocent man, and means of defence to the guilty, mingle a sentiment of admiration with the anguish of such a discussion. *How will you be tried?* says the officer of the court to the accused. *By God and my country,* replies the latter. *God grant you good deliverance,* rejoins the officer of the court. From the opening of the proceedings, if the prisoner be confused, if he commit himself by his answers, the judge sets him in the proper path, and takes no account of inconsiderate words which might escape him. In the progress of the trial he never addresses himself

to the accused, from a dread that the emotion naturally experienced by the latter might expose him to injure himself. Indirect witnesses, that is, witnesses who depose on hearsay, are never admitted, as in France. In short, all the precautions have the interest of the accused for their object. Religion and liberty preside over the imposing act which permits man to condemn his fellow creature to death. The admirable institution of juries, which in England goes back to a very remote period, introduces equity into the administration of justice. Those who are momentarily invested with the right of sending a guilty person to a capital punishment, have a natural sympathy with the habits of his life, as they are in general chosen in a class nearly similar to his own; and when juries are obliged to find a criminal guilty, he himself is at least certain that society has done every thing to procure his acquittal, if he had deserved it; and this conviction cannot but produce some tranquillity in his heart. For a century past there is perhaps no example in England of a capital conviction in which the innocence of the individual was discovered too late. The citizens of a free state have so large a share of good sense

and conscientiousness that, with these two directing lights, they never err.

We know what a clamour was produced in France by the sentence pronounced against Calas, by that against Lally; and shortly before the Revolution, president Dupaty published a most energetic pleading in favour of three accused persons who had been condemned to die on the wheel, and whose innocence was proved after their death. Such misfortunes could not occur under the laws and criminal procedure of England: and public opinion, that court of appeal, would, with the liberty of the press, make known the slightest error in that respect, were it possible that it could be committed.

However, offences which have no connexion whatever with politics are not those in which we have to dread the application of arbitrary power. In general it is of little consequence to the great personages of this world in what way robbers and assassins are tried; and no person has an interest in wishing that the laws should not be respected in such trials. But when political crimes are in question, those crimes with which opposite parties reproach each other with so much hatred and bitterness,

then it is that we have seen in France all kinds of extraordinary tribunals, created by existing circumstances, applied to such an individual, and justified, it was said, by the greatness of the offence; while it is exactly when this offence is of a nature to excite the passions strongly, that we are under the greatest necessity of recurring for its trial, to the dispassionate firmness of justice. The English had been vexed like the French, like every people of Europe, where the empire of law is not established, by the Star Chamber, by extraordinary commissions, by the extension of the crime of high treason to all that was displeasing to the possessors of power. But since liberty has been consolidated in England, not only has no individual accused of an offence against the state ever had to dread a removal from his natural judges,—who could admit such a thought? but the law gives to him more means of defence than to any other, because he has more enemies. A recent circumstance will show, in all its beauty, this respect of the English for justice, one of the most admirable traits of their admirable government.

Three attempts have been made, during the present reign, on the life of the King of England,

and certainly it was very dear to his subjects. The veneration which he inspires under his present malady has something affecting and delicate, of which one would never have thought an entire nation capable; and yet none of the assassins who endeavoured to kill the King have been condemned to death. They were found to bear symptoms of mental derangement, and these were made the object of an inquiry the more scrupulous, in proportion to the violence of public indignation against them. Louis XV was wounded by Damien towards the middle of the last century, and it is asserted that this wretch also was deranged; but supposing even that he possessed his reason to a degree that merited a capital punishment, can a civilized nation tolerate the tortures to which he was condemned? And it is said that those tortures had inquisitive and voluntary witnesses: what a contrast between such barbarity and the proceedings in England! But let us beware of deducing from this any consequence unfavourable to the French character; it is arbitrary government that depraves a nation, and not a decree of Heaven awarding every virtue to one, and every vice to another.

Hatfield is the name of the third of the madmen who attempted to assassinate the King of England. He chose the day when the King re-appeared at the theatre after a long illness, accompanied by the Queen and the royal family. At the moment the King entered the house, was heard the report of a pistol fired in the direction of his box; and as he stepped back a few paces, the public were, for a moment, doubtful whether the murder had not been committed; but when the courageous Monarch again advanced to relieve the crowd of spectators, whose disquietude was extreme, nothing can express the transport they felt. The musicians, by a spontaneous impulse, struck up the sacred tune, "God save the king," and this prayer produced, in the midst of the public anxiety, an emotion of which the recollection still lives in the bottom of the heart. After such a scene, many persons, unacquainted with the virtues of liberty, would have loudly demanded a cruel death for the assassin, and the courtiers would have been seen acting the part of the populace in their frenzy, as if the excess of their affection no longer left them masters of themselves; nothing of this

kind could take place in a free country. The King, in the capacity of magistrate, was protector of his assassin from a feeling of justice, and no Englishman imagined it was possible to please his sovereign by the sacrifice of the immutable law which represents the will of God on earth.

Not only was the course of Justice not hastened a single hour, but we shall see, by the preamble to the pleading of Mr. Erskine, now Lord Erskine, what precautions are adopted in favour of a state criminal. Let us add that, in trials for high treason, the defender of the accused has a right to plead in his defence : in ordinary cases of felony, he can only examine witnesses and call the attention of the jury to their answers. And what a defender was he who was given to Hatfield?—Erskine, the most eloquent lawyer in England, the most ingenious in the art of pleading. It was thus that his speech began : *

* I cannot too strongly recommend to French readers the collection of the speeches of Erskine, who was raised to the rank of chancellor after a long and distinguished career at

“ Gentlemen of the Jury.—The scene which we are engaged in, and the duty which I am not merely privileged, but appointed by the authority of the court to perform, exhibits to the whole civilised world a perpetual monument of our national justice.

“ The transaction, indeed, in every part of it, as it stands recorded in the evidence already before us, places our country, and its government, its inhabitants, and its laws, upon the highest pinnacle of moral elevation that social order can attain. It appears that, on the 15th day of May last, His Majesty, after a reign of forty years, not merely in sovereign power, but spontaneously in the very hearts of his people, was openly shot at (or to all appearance shot at), in a public theatre in the centre of his capital, and amidst

the bar. Descended from one of the oldest families in Scotland, he set out in life as an officer; and afterwards, being without fortune, entered on the profession of the law. The particular circumstances to which the pleadings of Lord Erskine relate, are all opportunities for displaying, with unrivalled strength and sagacity, the principles of criminal jurisprudence which ought to serve as a model to every people.

the loyal plaudits of his subjects ; yet not a hair of the head of the supposed assassin was touched. In this unparalleled scene of calm forbearance, the King himself, though he stood first in personal interest and feeling, as well as in command, gave an example of calmness and moderation equally singular and fortunate.

“ Gentlemen, I agree with the Attorney-General (indeed there can be no possible doubt), that if the same pistol had been maliciously fired by the prisoner in the same theatre, at the meanest man within its walls, he would have been brought to immediate trial, and, if guilty, to immediate execution. He would have heard the charge against him for the first time when the indictment was read upon his arraignment. He would have been a stranger to the names and even to the existence of those who were to sit in judgment upon him, and of those who were to be witnesses against him ; but upon the charge of even this murderous attack upon the King himself, he is entirely covered with the armour of the law. He has been provided with counsel by the King’s own judges, and not of their choice, but of his own. He has had a copy of the indictment ten

days before his trial.—He has had the names, descriptions, and abodes of all the jurors returned to the court ; he has enjoyed the important privilege of peremptorily rejecting them without assigning the motive of his refusal. He has had the same description of every witness who could be received to accuse him ; and there must at this hour be twice the testimony against him that would be legally competent to establish his guilt on a similar prosecution by the meanest and most helpless of mankind.

“ Gentlemen, when this melancholy catastrophe happened, I remember to have said to some now present, that it was, at first view, difficult to go back to the principle of those indulgent exceptions to the general rules of procedure, and to explain why our ancestors extended to conspiracies against the king’s person, the precautions which concern treasons against government. In fact, in cases of political treason, passions and interests of great bodies of powerful men being engaged and agitated, a counterpoise became necessary to give composure and impartiality to criminal tribunals ; but a mere murderous attack upon the king’s person, not at all connected with his political

character, seemed a case to be ranged and dealt with like a similar attack upon any private man.

“ But the wisdom of the law is greater than any man’s wisdom ; how much more, therefore, than mine ! An attack upon the king is considered to be parricide against the state ; and the jury and the witnesses, and even the judges, are the children. It is fit, on that account, that there should be a solemn pause before we rush to judgment ; and what can be a more sublime spectacle of justice, than that of a whole nation declared disqualified from judging during a limited period ? Was not a fifteen days’ quarantine necessary to preserve the mind from the contagion of so natural a partiality.”

What a country is that, in which such words are only the plain and accurate exposition of the existing state of things.

The civil jurisprudence of England is much less entitled to praise ; the suits in it are too tedious and too expensive. It will certainly be ameliorated in course of time, as it has already been in several respects ; for what, above all things, characterizes the English government, is the possibility of im-

proving itself without convulsion. There remain in England old forms, originating in the feudal ages, which surcharge the civil administration of law with a number of useless delays; but the constitution was established by engrafting the new on the old, and if the result has been the keeping up of certain abuses, it can, on the other hand, be said that liberty has in this way received the advantage of claiming an ancient origin. A condescension for old usages does not extend in England to any thing that concerns individual security and liberty: in that respect the ascendancy of reason is complete, and it is on the basis of reason that all reposes.

Before we proceed to the consideration of political powers, without which civil rights would possess no guarantee, we must speak of the only infraction of individual liberty with which England can be reproached—the impressment of seamen. I will not urge the motives founded on the great interest which a country whose power is maritime, has to maintain itself in this respect in strength; nor will I say that this kind of violence is confined to those who have already served either in the mercantile or in the royal navy, and who consequently

know, as soldiers do on land, the kind of obligation to which they are subjected. I prefer admitting frankly that it is a great abuse, but an abuse which will, doubtless, be reformed in some way ; for in a country in which the thoughts of all are turned towards the improvement of the state of society, and where the liberty of the press is favourable to the extension of public spirit, it is impossible that truths of every kind should not, in the long run, attain effectual circulation. We may predict, that at a period more or less remote, we shall see important changes in the mode of recruiting the navy of England.

“ Well ! ” exclaim the enemies of all public virtue, “ supposing the good that is said of England to be well founded, the only result is that it is a country ably and wisely governed, as every other country might be : but it is by no means free in the way that philosophers understand freedom, for ministers are masters of every thing in that as in other countries. They purchase votes in parliament in such a way as to obtain constantly a majority ; and the whole of this English constitution, which we hear spoken of with so much admiration, is nothing but the art of bringing poli-

tical venality into play." Mankind would be much to be pitied were the world thus stripped of all its moral beauties, and it would then be difficult to comprehend the views of the Divinity in the creation of men ; but happily these assertions are combated by facts as much as by theory. It is inconceivable how ill England is appreciated on the Continent, in spite of the little distance that separates the two. Party spirit rejects the light which it would receive from this immortal beacon ; and people refuse to look at any thing in England but her diplomatic influence, which is not, as I shall explain in the sequel, the fair side of that country.

Can people in reality persuade themselves, that the English ministers give money to the members of the House of Commons, or to members of the House of Peers, to vote on the side of government ? How could the English ministers, who render so exact an account of the public money, find sums of sufficient magnitude to bribe men of such large fortune, to say nothing whatever of their character ? Mr. Pitt, several years ago, threw himself on the indulgence of the House, in consequence of having lent 40,000*l.* to support some mercantile establishments during the

last war ; and what is called secret service money is of too small amount to command the least political influence in the interior of the country. Moreover, would not the liberty of the press, the torch which sheds light on the smallest details of the life of public men, would it not expose those presents of corruption, which would for ever ruin those who had received them, as well as the ministers who had bestowed them ?

There did, I confess, exist under Mr. Pitt's predecessors, some examples of bargains concluded for government in such a way as to give an indirect advantage to members of parliament ; but Mr. Pitt abstained altogether from expedients so unworthy of him ; he established a free competition for loans and contracts ; and yet no man exercised a greater sway over both houses. " Yes," it will be said, " peers and members of the commons are not gained by money, but their object is places for themselves and their friends ; and corruption in this way is as effectual as in the other." Doubtless, the favours at the disposal of the crown form a part of the prerogative of the king, and consequently of the constitution. This influence is one of the weights in the balance so wisely combined ;

and, moreover, it is a very limited one. Never would ministry have either the power or the idea of making any change in what regards the constitutional liberties of England. Public opinion presents in that respect an invincible barrier. Public delicacy consecrates certain truths as above attack; and the opposition would no more think of criticizing the institution of the peerage, than the ministerial party would presume to blame the liberty of the press. It is only in the circle of momentary circumstances, that certain personal or family considerations can influence the directions of some minds; but never to a degree to cause the infraction of constitutional laws. Even were the king desirous of exempting himself from these laws, the responsibility of ministers would not permit them to support him in it: and those who compose the majority in the two houses would be still less disposed to renounce their real rights as lords, representatives, and citizens, to acquire the favour of a court.

Fidelity to a party is one of the virtues founded on respect for public spirit, from which the greatest advantages result to English liberty. If to-morrow the ministers go out of office, those who voted with

them and to whom they have given places quit those places along with them. A man would be dishonoured in England, were he to separate from his political friends on private views. Public opinion in this respect is so decided, that a man of a very respectable name and character was known, not very long ago, to commit suicide, unable to bear the self-reproach of having accepted a place without the concurrence of his party. Never do you hear the same mouth give utterance to two opposite opinions ; and yet, in the existing state of things in England, the differences lie in shades, not colours. The Tories, it has been said, approve of liberty and love monarchy, while the Whigs approve of monarchy and love liberty ; but between these two parties, no question could arise about a republican or a regal form of government, about the old or the new dynasty, liberty or servitude ; in short, about any of those extremes and contrasts which we have seen professed by the same men in France, as if we ought to say of power as of love, that the object is of no consequence, provided one be always faithful to the sentiment, that is, to devotedness to power.

Dispositions of a very opposite character are the

objects of admiration in England. For nearly half a century the members of opposition have been in place only three or four years; yet party fidelity has not been shaken among them; and even recently, at the time I was in England, I saw lawyers refuse places of 7 or 8000*l.* a year, which were not immediately connected with politics, only because they had engagements of opinion with the friends of Fox. Were a man in France to refuse a place of 8000*l.* a-year, truly his relations would think it high time to take out a statute of lunacy against him.

The existence of a ministerial and opposition party, although it cannot be prescribed by law, is an essential support of liberty founded on the nature of things. In every country where you see an assembly of men constantly in accord, be assured that despotism exists, or that despotism, if not the cause, will be the result of unanimity. Now as power, and the favours at the disposal of power, possess attraction for men, liberty could not exist but with this fidelity to party, which introduces, if we may use the phrase, a discipline of honour into the ranks of members enrolled under different banners.

But if opinions are formed beforehand, how can truth and eloquence operate on an assembly? How can the majority change when circumstances call for change? and of what avail is discussion, if no one can vote agreeably to his conviction? The case is not so: what is called fidelity to your party consists in not separating your personal interests from those of your political friends, and in your not treating separately with men in power. But it often happens that circumstances or arguments influence the mass of the assembly, and that the neutral party, whose number is considerable, that is, the men who do not take an active part in politics, produce a majority on the other side. It is in the nature of the English government that ministers cannot remain in office without having this majority in their favour; yet Mr. Pitt, although he lost it for an interval, in the outset of his ministerial career, was enabled to keep his place, because public opinion, which was in his favour, enabled him to dissolve parliament, and have recourse to a new election. In short, public opinion bears the sway in England, and it is public opinion that constitutes the liberty of a country.

The jealous friends of this liberty desire a re-

form in parliament, and maintain that there is no truth in the existence of a representative government so long as the elections shall be so managed as to put the choice of a great number of deputies at the disposal of the ministry. The ministry, it is true, can influence a number of elections, such as those of the Cornish boroughs, and some others of the same nature, in which the right of electing has been preserved, although the electors have, in a great measure, disappeared ; while towns, of which the population is greatly increased, have not so many deputies as their population would require, or have even none at all. We may reckon, in the number of the prerogatives of the crown, the right of introducing by its influence sixty or eighty members into the House of Commons out of six hundred and fifty-eight who compose it ; but this abuse, for it is one, has not, down to the latest times, altered the strength and independence of the English parliament.

The bishops and archbishops who have seats in the House of Peers, vote likewise almost always with the ministry, except in points relative to religion. It is not from corrupt motives but from a sense of propriety that prelates appointed by the

king do not in general attack ministers ; but all these different elements, that enter into the composition of the national representation, do not prevent it from proceeding under the eye of public opinion ; nor prevent men of importance in England, whether for talent, fortune, or personal respectability, from being in general members of the House. There are great proprietors and peers who dispose of certain seats in the House of Commons in the same way as ministers ; and when these peers are in the Opposition, the members, whom they have caused to be returned, vote in like manner on their side. All these accidental circumstances make no change in the nature of the representative government. What, above all, is of importance, is the publicity of debate, and the admirable forms of deliberation which protect the minority. Deputies returned by lot would, with the liberty of the press, represent the national opinion in a country more faithfully than the most regularly elected deputies, if they were not guided and enlightened by that liberty.

It would, however, be desirable to make a gradual suppression of elections that have become illusory, and that, on the other hand, a fairer

representation were given to population and property, in order to re-animate a little the spirit of parliament which the re-action against the French Revolution has rendered in some respects too acquiescent towards the executive power. But there exists a dread of the strength of the popular element composing the third branch of the legislature, although modified by the discretion and dignity of the members of the House of Commons. There are, however, some men in that assembly, whose opinions are very decided in favour of democracy. Not only must that be the case, wherever opinion is free, but it is even desirable that the existence of such opinions should remind the grandees of the country that they cannot preserve the advantages of their rank otherwise than by consulting the rights and welfare of the nation. Yet it would be a great error to imagine on the Continent that the Opposition party is democratic. What strange democrats would be the Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Bedford, the Marquis of Stafford! On the contrary, it is the high aristocracy of England which serves as a barrier to royal authority. The Opposition are, it is true, more liberal than ministers in their principles : to combat power is sufficient

to give a new temper to the mind and heart. But how could one apprehend a revolutionary commotion on the part of individuals possessed of every kind of property which order causes to be respected ; of fortune, rank, and, above all, of knowledge ; for knowledge, when real and profound, gives men a consistency equal to that of wealth.

In the House of Commons in England no attempts are made at that kind of eloquence which excites the multitude : discussion predominates in that assembly, the spirit of business presides there, and there prevails perhaps too great a strictness in regard to oratorical display. Even Burke, whose political writings are now so much admired, was not listened to with attention when speaking in the Lower House, because he introduced into his speeches ornaments foreign to his subject, and belonging properly to literature. Ministers are often required to give, in the House of Commons, particular explanations which do not at all enter into the debates. The deputies from the different towns or counties apprise the members of government of the abuses which may occur in local administration, of the reforms and improvement of

which it is susceptible; and these habitual communications between the representatives of the people and the heads of the executive power are productive of the happiest results.

“ If the majority of parliament is not bribed by ministers,” say those who think they are pleading their own cause by demonstrating the degradation of mankind, “ at least you will admit that candidates expend enormous sums on their elections.” It cannot be denied that in certain elections there exists venality, notwithstanding the severity of the law. The greatest part of the cost consists in travelling expenses, that is, in bringing to the place of election voters who live at a great distance. The consequence is, that none except very opulent persons can venture to run the risk of coming forward as candidates for such places, and that the expense of elections is sometimes carried to a foolish extreme in England, like expense of every kind in other monarchies. Yet in what country can popular elections exist without endeavours to win the favour of the people? This is precisely the grand advantage of the institution. It happens then for once that the rich stand in need of the class which in general is dependant on them. Lord Erskine

told me that, in his career of counsellor and member of the House of Commons, there was perhaps not one inhabitant of Westminster to whom he had not had occasion to speak ; so great are the political relations between the citizens and men of the highest rank. Nominations by a court are almost always influenced by the most confined motives ; the broad day of popular election cannot be borne but by individuals remarkable for some quality or other. Merit will always triumph at last in countries where the public is called on to point it out.

That which is particularly characteristic of England is a mixture of chivalrous spirit with an enthusiasm for liberty, the two most noble sentiments of which the human heart is susceptible. Circumstances have brought about this fortunate result, and we ought to admit that new institutions would not suffice to produce it : the recollection of the past is necessary to consecrate aristocratic ranks ; for if they were all of the creation of power, they would be subject, in part, to the inconveniences experienced in France under Bonaparte. But what can be done in a country where the nobility should be inimical to liberty of every

kind. The *Tiers Etat* could not form a union with them; and, as it would be the stronger of the two, it would incessantly threaten the nobility until the latter had submitted to the progress of reason.

The English aristocracy is of a more mixed kind in the eyes of a genealogist than that of France; but the English nation seems, if we may say so, one entire body of gentlemen. You see in every English citizen what he may one day become, since no rank lies beyond the reach of talent, and since high ranks have always kept up their ancient splendour. It is true that that which, above all, constitutes nobility, in the view of an enlightened mind, is the being free. An English nobleman or gentleman (taking the word gentleman in the sense of a man of independent property) exercises, in his part of the country, some useful employment to which no salary is attached: as a justice of the peace, sheriff, or lord lieutenant in the county where his property is situated; he influences elections in a manner that is suitable, and that increases his credit with the people; as a peer or member of the House of Commons, he discharges a political function, and possesses a real importance.

This is not the idle aristocracy of a French nobleman, who was of no consideration in the state whenever the king refused him his favour; it is a distinction founded on all the interests of the nation: and we cannot avoid being surprised, that French gentlemen should have preferred the life of a courtier, moving on the road from Versailles to Paris, to the majestic stability of an English Peer on his estate, surrounded by men to whom he can do a thousand acts of kindness, but over whom he can exercise no arbitrary power. The authority of law is in England predominant over all the powers of the state, as Fate in ancient mythology was superior to the authority of the gods themselves.

To the political miracle of a respect for the rights of every one founded on a sentiment of justice, we must add the equally skilful and fortunate union of equality, in the eye of the law, to the advantages arising from the separation of ranks. In that country every one stands in need of others for his comfort, yet every one is there independent of all by his rights. This *Tiers Etat*, which has become so prodigiously aggrandized in France, and in the rest of Europe, this *Tiers Etat*, the increase of which necessitates successive changes in all old

institutions, is united in England to the nobility, because the nobility itself is identified with the nation. A great number of Peers owe the origin of their dignity to the law, some to commerce, others to a military career, others to political eloquence; there is not one virtue, nor one kind of talent which has not its place, or which may not flatter itself with attaining it; and every thing in the social edifice conduces to the glory of that constitution, which is as dear to the duke of Norfolk as to the meanest porter in England, because it protects both with the same equity.

Thee I account still happy, and the chief
 Among the nations, seeing thou art free,
 My native nook of earth ! Thy clime is rude,
 Replete with vapours, and disposes much
 All hearts to sorrow, and none more than mine :

.....
 Yet, being free, I love thee..... *

These verses are by a poet of admirable talents, but whose happiness was destroyed by his extreme sensibility. He was labouring under a mortal

disease of melancholy ; and when love, friendship, philosophy, every thing added to his sufferings, a free country yet awakened in his soul an enthusiasm which nothing could extinguish.

All men are more or less attached to their country ; the recollections of infancy, the habits of youth, form that inexpressible love of the native soil which we must acknowledge as a virtue, for all true feeling constitutes its source. But in a great state, liberty, and the happiness arising from that liberty, can alone inspire true patriotism : nothing accordingly is comparable to public spirit in England. The English are accused of selfishness, and it is true that their mode of life is so well regulated that they generally confine themselves within the circle of their habits and domestic affections ; but what sacrifice is too great for them when the interest of their country is at stake ? And among what people in the world are services rendered, felt, and rewarded with more enthusiasm. When we enter Westminster Abbey, all those tombs, sacred to the men who have been illustrious for centuries past, seem to reproduce the spectacle of the greatness of England among the dead. Kings and philosophers repose under the same roof :

it is there that quarrels are appeased, as has been well observed by the celebrated Walter Scott.* You behold the tombs of Pitt and Fox beside each other, and the same tears bedew both ; for they both deserve the profound regret which generous minds ought to bestow on that noble portion of our species who serve to support our confidence in the immortality of the soul.

Let us recollect the funeral of Nelson, when nearly a million of persons, scattered throughout London and the neighbourhood, contemplated in silence the passage of his hearse. The multitude forbore all noisy demonstrations, the multitude evinced as much respect in the expression of its grief as might have been expected from the most polished society. Nelson had given as a signal, on the day of Trafalgar, " England expects every man to do his duty ;" he had accomplished that duty, and when expiring on board his vessel, the honourable obsequies which his country would grant him

* Genius, and taste, and talent gone,
For ever tomb'd beneath the stone,
Where, taming thought to human pride !
The mighty chiefs sleep side by side.
Drop upon Fox's grave the tear,
'Twill trickle to his rival's bier.

presented themselves to his thoughts as the beginning of a new life.

Nor yet let us be silent on Lord Wellington, although in France we cannot but suffer by the recollection of his glory. With what transport was he not received by the representatives of the nation, by the Peers and by the Commons. No ceremony was required to convey this homage, as in the case of Nelson, where the object of it was no more ; but the transports of the English people burst forth on all sides. The acclamations of the crowd resounded in the lobby before he entered the House ; when he appeared, all the members rose with a spontaneous motion, unrequired by any formality. The homage which in other countries is dictated, was here inspired by emotion. Yet nothing could be more simple than the reception of Lord Wellington : there were no guards, no military pomp to do honour to the greatest general of the age in which Bonaparte lived : but the day was celebrated by the voice of the people, and nothing like it could be seen in any other country upon earth.

Ah ! what a fascinating enjoyment is that of popularity ! I know all that can be said on the inconstancy, and even the caprice of popular favour ;

but those reproaches are more applicable to ancient republics, where the democratic forms of government led to the most rapid vicissitudes. In a country governed like England, and, moreover, enlightened by that torch, without which all is darkness, the liberty of the press, men and things, are judged with the greatest equity. Truth is submitted to the observation of every one, while the various constraints that are employed elsewhere, produce necessarily great uncertainty in opinions. A libel that glides across the compulsory silence to which the press is condemned, may change public opinion in regard to any man, for the praise or the censure ordered by government is always suspicious. Nothing can be clearly and solidly settled in the minds of men, but by free discussion.

“Do you pretend,” it may be said, “that there is no mutability in the judgment of the English people, and that they will not offer incense to-day, to him whom they would perhaps tear in pieces to-morrow?” Doubtless, those who are at the head of government should be exposed to lose the favour of the people, if they are not successful in the management of public affairs. The depositaries of authority ought to be fortunate; that is

one of the conditions of ~~the~~ advantages that are granted to them. Besides, power having always a tendency to deprave those who possess it, it is always to be wished, in a free country, that the same men should not remain too long in office; and it is right to change ministers, were it only for the sake of changing. But reputation, once acquired, is very durable in England, and public opinion may be considered as the conscience of the state.

If any thing can seduce the English nation from equity it is misfortune. An individual, prosecuted by any power whatever, might inspire an undeserved, and consequently a fleeting interest. But this noble error belongs, on the other hand, to the generosity of the English character, and, on the other, to that sentiment of liberty which makes all feel the desire of defending themselves mutually against oppression; for it is in that respect especially that, in politics, we should treat our neighbour as ourselves.

The state of information, and the energy of public spirit, is more than a sufficient answer to the arguments of those men who pretend that the army would overpower the liberty of England, if

England were a continental state. It is, without doubt, an advantage to England, that her strength consists rather in her marine, than in her land forces. It requires more knowledge to be a captain of a ship, than a colonel; and none of the habits acquired at sea, lead one to desire to interfere in the interior affairs of the country. But were nature, in a lavish mood, to create ten Lord Wellingtons, and were the world again to witness ten battles of Waterloo, it would never enter the heads of those who so readily give their lives for their country, to turn their force against it; or, if so, they would encounter an invincible obstacle among men as brave as themselves, and more enlightened, who detest the military spirit, although they know how to admire and practise warlike virtues.

That sort of prejudice which persuaded the French nobility, that they could serve their country only in the career of arms, exists not at all in England. Many sons of lords are counsellors; the bar participates in the respect that is felt for the law; and in every career civil occupations are held in esteem. In such a country there is nothing as yet to be feared from military power: ignorant nations only have a blind admiration for the

sword. Bravery is an admirable quality, when we expose a life dear to our family, and when, with a mind filled with virtue and knowledge, a citizen becomes a soldier to maintain his rights as a citizen. But when men fight only because they will not take the trouble to employ their minds and their time in some steady pursuit, they cannot be long admired by a nation where industry and reflection hold the first rank. The satellites of Cromwell overthrew a civil power which had neither strength nor dignity; but since the existence of the constitution, and of public spirit which is its soul, princes or generals, were they at any time to dream of enslaving their country, would only excite in the whole nation a feeling of contempt for their folly.

CHAPTER V.

Of Knowledge, Religion, and Morals, among the English.

WHAT constitutes the knowledge of a nation are sound political ideas disseminated through every class, and general information in science and literature. In the former, the English have no rivals in Europe; in the latter, I know none that can be compared to them, except the inhabitants of the North of Germany. Still the English would have an advantage which can belong only to institutions like theirs, which is, that the first class of society devotes itself as much to study as the second. Mr. Fox wrote learned dissertations on Greek, during his hours of leisure from parliamentary debates: Mr. Windham has left several interesting treatises on mathematics and literature. The English have at all times honoured learning: Henry VIII, who trampled every thing under foot, yet respected men of letters, when they did not come in opposition to his ungoverned passions. The great

Elizabeth was well versed in the ancient languages, and even spoke Latin with facility. That foppery of ignorance, with which we had reason to reproach the French nobility, was never introduced among the princes or nobility of England. One would think that the former were persuaded that the divine right, by which they hold their privileges, entirely exempted them from the study of human science. Such a manner of thinking could not exist in England, and would only appear ridiculous. Nothing factitious can succeed in a country where every thing is subjected to publicity. The great English nobility would be as much ashamed of not having had a distinguished classical education, as men of the second rank in France were, in former days, of not going to court; and these differences are not connected, as some pretend, with French frivolity. The most persevering scholars, the deepest thinkers, have belonged to that nation, which is capable of every thing when it chooses; but its political institutions were so defective, that they perverted its natural good qualities.

In England, on the contrary, the institutions favour every kind of intellectual progress. The

juries, the administrations of counties and towns, the elections, the newspapers, give the whole nation a great share of interest in public affairs. The consequence is, that it is better informed ; and that, at a venture, it would be better to converse with an English farmer on political questions, than with the greater number of men on the Continent, even the most enlightened. That admirable good sense which is founded on justice and security, exists nowhere but in England, or in the country that resembles it, America. Reflection must remain a stranger to men who have no rights ; since as soon as they perceive the truth, they must be first unhappy, and soon after filled with the spirit of revolt. It must be admitted also, that in a country where the armed force has almost always been naval, and commerce the principal occupation, there must necessarily be more knowledge than where the national defence is confided to the troops of the line, and where industry is almost entirely directed to the cultivation of the ground. Commerce, placing men in relation with the interests *of the world*, extends the ideas, exercises the judgment, and, from the multiplicity and diversity of transactions, makes the necessity of justice conti-

nually felt. In countries where the only pursuit is agriculture, the mass of the population may be composed of serfs attached to the soil, and devoid of all information. But what could be done with slavery and ignorance in a mercantile capacity? A maritime and commercial country is, therefore, necessarily more enlightened than any other; yet there remains much to be done to give the English people a proper degree of education. A considerable portion of the lowest class can as yet neither read nor write; and it is, doubtless, to remedy this evil that the new methods of Bell and Lancaster are so warmly encouraged, because they are calculated to bring education within the reach of the indigent. The lower orders are perhaps better informed in Switzerland, in Sweden, and in some parts of the north of Germany; but in none of these countries is found that vigour of liberty which will preserve England, it is to be hoped, from the re-action occasioned by the French Revolution. In a country where there is an immense capital, great riches concentrated in a small number of hands, a court, all that can tend to the corruption of the people, time is requisite for knowledge to extend itself, and to oppose successfully

the inconveniences attached to the disproportion of fortunes.

The peasantry of Scotland are better informed than that of England, because there is less wealth in the hands of a few, and more competency of circumstances among the lower orders. The presbyterian religion established in Scotland excludes the episcopal hierarchy, maintained by the English church. Consequently the choice of the simple ministers of public worship is better ; and as they pass their life in retirement, they devote their time to the instruction of the country people. It is also a great advantage for Scotland not to be subject, like England, to a very oppressive and very ill planned poor's rate, which keeps up mendicity, and creates a class of people who dare not quit the parish where they are secure of relief. The city of Edinburgh is not so much absorbed as London by public business, and does not contain such an assemblage of wealth and luxury : hence, philosophical and literary interests more fully occupy the mind. But, on the other hand, the remains of the feudal system are more felt in Scotland than in England. Juries in civil affairs have been but recently introduced, and there are not nearly so

many popular elections in proportion as among the English. Commerce has there less influence, and the spirit of liberty is, with some exceptions, displayed with less energy.

In Ireland, the ignorance of the lower orders is frightful; but that must be attributed, in part, to superstitious prejudices, and, on the other, to the almost total privation of the benefits of a constitution. Ireland has been but lately united to England; she has felt till now all the evils of arbitrary power, and has often avenged herself of it in a most violent manner. The nation being divided into two religions, forming also two political parties, the English government since Charles I has granted every advantage to the Protestants, in order to enable them to keep in submission the Catholic majority. Swift, an Irishman, and as fine a genius as any in the three kingdoms,* wrote,

* It is related that Swift felt a foreboding that his faculties would abandon him, and that walking one day with a friend, he saw an oak, the head of which was withered, though the trunk and roots were yet in full vigour. "It is thus I shall be," said Swift; and his melancholy prediction was accomplished. When he had fallen into such a state of stupor, that for a whole year he had not uttered a word, he suddenly

in 1740, on the miserable state of Ireland. The attention of enlightened men was strongly excited by the writings of Swift, and the improvements which took place in that country may be dated from that time. When America declared herself independent, and England was obliged to acknowledge her as such, the necessity of paying attention to Ireland was felt every day more strongly by reflecting minds. The illustrious talents of Mr. Grattan, which, thirty years later, have again astonished England, were remarked so early as 1782 in the parliament of Ireland; and by degrees that country was at length brought to a union with Great Britain. Superstitious prejudices are still, however, the source of a thousand evils there; for to reach the same point of prosperity as England,

heard the bells of St. Patrick's, of which he was the Dean, ringing in full peal, and asked what it meant. His friends, in raptures that he had recovered his speech, hastened to inform him that it was in honour of his birth-day that these signs of joy were taking place. "Ah!" he exclaimed, "all that is unavailing now;" and he returned to that silence which death soon after confirmed. But the good he had done survived him, and it is for this that men of genius appear on the earth.

the knowledge connected with a reform in religion is as necessary as the free spirit of a representative government. The political exclusion, to which the Irish Catholics are condemned, is contrary to the true principles of justice ; but it seems difficult to put in possession of the benefits of the constitution men who are irritated by long standing resentment.

Hitherto then we can admire in the Irish nation, only a great character of independence, and a great deal of natural quickness ; but in that country people do not yet enjoy either the security or the instruction which are the result of religious and political liberty. Scotland is, in many respects, the opposite of Ireland, and England retains something of both.

It being impossible in England to be minister without sitting in one of the Houses of Parliament, and discussing the affairs of state with the representatives of the nation, it unavoidably follows that such ministers bear, in general, no resemblance to the class of governors in an absolute monarchy. The esteem of the public is, in England, the first aim of men in power ; they scarcely ever make a fortune in the ministry. Mr. Pitt died, leaving

nothing but debts, which the parliament paid. The under-secretaries of state, the clerks, all persons connected with the administration, enlightened by public opinion and their own pride, possess the most perfect integrity. Ministers cannot favour their partizans, unless the latter are sufficiently distinguished not to excite the discontent of Parliament. It is not enough to have the favour of the master to remain in place ; it is necessary also to have the esteem of the representatives of the nation ; and this can be obtained only by real ability. Ministers appointed by court intrigue, as we have seen continually in France, would not support themselves twenty-four hours in the House of Commons. Their mediocrity would be ascertained in an instant ; they would not appear there, be-powdered, and in the full costume of the ministers of the old government or of the court of Bonaparte. They would not be surrounded with courtiers, acting the same part with them which they themselves act with the King : and bursting into raptures at the justness of their common-place ideas, and the depth of their false conceptions. An English minister enters either House alone, without any particular dress, without a distinctive mark ; no sort of charlatanism

comes to his aid ; every body questions and judges him ; but, on the other hand, he is respected by all, if he deserve it, because being able to pass only for what he is, the esteem he enjoys is due to his personal worth.

“ They do not,” it will be said, “ pay their court to princes in England as in France, but they seek popularity, which does not less impair the truth of character.” In a well-organized country, like England, to desire popularity is to wish for the just recompence of all that is noble and good in itself. There have existed, in all times, men who were virtuous, notwithstanding the hardships or the perils to which they were exposed in consequence ; but when social institutions are combined in such a manner, that private interests and public virtues accord, it does not thence follow that these virtues have no other basis than personal interest. They are only more general, because they are advantageous as well as honourable.

The science of liberty (if we may use that expression) at the point at which it is cultivated in England, supposes in itself a very high degree of information. Nothing can be more simple than

that doctrine, when once the principles on which it reposes have been adopted; but it is nevertheless certain that, on the Continent, we seldom meet with any person who, in heart and mind, understands England. It would seem as if there were moral truths, amidst which we must be born, and which the beating of the heart inculcates better than all the discussions of theory. Nevertheless, to enjoy and practise that liberty, which unites all the advantages of republican virtues, of philosophical knowledge, of religious sentiments, and monarchical dignity, a great share of understanding is requisite in the people, and a high degree of study and virtue in men of the first class. An English minister must unite with the qualities of a statesman the art of expressing himself with eloquence. It thence follows, that literature and philosophy are much more appreciated, because they contribute efficaciously to the success of the highest ambition. We hear incessantly of the empire of rank and of wealth among the English; but we must also acknowledge the admiration which is granted to real talents. Among the lowest class of society, a peerage and a fortune may produce more

effect than the name of a great writer ; this is necessarily the case ; but if the question regards the enjoyments of good company, and consequently of public esteem, I know no country in the world where it is more advantageous to be a man of superiority. Not only every employment, every rank may be the recompence of talent ; but public esteem is expressed in so flattering a manner as to confer enjoyments more keenly felt than any other.

The emulation which such a prospect naturally excites is one of the principal causes of the incredible extent of information diffused in England. Were it possible to make a statistical report of knowledge, in no country should we find so great a proportion of persons conversant in the study of ancient languages, a study, unfortunately, too much neglected in France. Private libraries without number, collections of every kind, subscriptions in abundance for all literary undertakings, establishments for public education, exist in all directions, in every county, at the extremity as in the centre of the kingdom ; in short, we find at each step altars erected to understanding, and

these altars serve as a support to those of religion and virtue.

Thanks to toleration, to political institutions, and the liberty of the press, there is a greater respect for religion and for morals in England than in any other country in Europe. In France people take a pleasure in saying, that it is precisely for the sake of religion and morals that censors have been at all times employed; but let them compare the spirit of literature in England since the liberty of the press is established there, with the different writings which appeared under the arbitrary reign of Charles II, and under the Regent, or Louis XV in France. The licentiousness of published works was carried among the French in the last century to a degree that excites horror. The case is the same in Italy, where however the press has at all times been subjected to the most galling restrictions. Ignorance in the bulk of the people, and the most lawless independence in men of superior parts, is always the result of constraint.

English literature is certainly of all others that in which there are the greatest number of philosophic works. Scotland contains, at this day,

very powerful writers in that department, with Dugald Stewart at their head, who in retirement pursues with ardour the search of truth. Literary criticism is carried to the highest pitch in the Reviews, particularly in that of Edinburgh; in which writers, formed to acquire fame by original works, Jeffrey, Playfair, Mackintosh, do not disdain to enlighten authors by the opinions they pass on their works. The most learned writers on questions of jurisprudence and political economy, such as Bentham, Malthus, Brougham, are more numerous in England than any where else, because they have a well-founded hope that their ideas will be reduced to practice. Voyages to every part of the world bring to England the tributes of science, which are not less welcome than those of commerce; but in the midst of so many intellectual treasures, of every kind, we cannot cite any of those irreligious or licentious works with which France has been inundated: public opinion has reprobated them from the moment that it had cause to dread them; and it acquits itself of this with the more alacrity, because it is the only sentinel for this purpose. Publicity is always favourable to truth; and as morality and religion are

truth in its highest character, the more you permit men to discuss these subjects, the more they become enlightened and dignified. The courts of justice would very properly punish in England any publication offensive to character and morals ; but no work bears that mark of official inspection (*censure*) which casts a previous doubt on the assertions it may contain.

English poetry, which is fostered neither by irreligion, nor the spirit of faction, nor licentiousness of manners, is still rich and animated, experiencing nothing of that decline which threatens successively the literature of most other countries in Europe. Sensibility and imagination preserve an immortal youth of mind. A second age of poetry has arisen in England, because enthusiasm is not there extinct, and because nature, love, and country, always exercise great power there. Cowper lately, and now Rogers, Moore, Thomas Campbell, Walter Scott, Lord Byron, in different departments and degrees, are preparing a new age of glory for English poetry ; and while on the Continent every thing is in a state of degradation, the eternal fountain of beauty still flows from the land of freedom.

In what empire is Christianity more respected than in England? Where are greater pains taken to propagate it? Whence do missionaries proceed in so great number to every part of the world? The Society which has taken on itself to transmit copies of the Bible into countries where the light of Christianity is obscured, or not yet displayed, transmitted quantities of them into France during the war, and this care was not superfluous. But I should at present deviate from my subject, were I to enter here on what would constitute an apology for France in that respect.

The Reformation placed the cultivation of knowledge among the English in harmony with the feelings of religion. This has been of great advantage to that country; and the high degree of piety of which individuals there are capable, leads always to austerity in morals, and scarcely ever to superstition. Particular sects in England, the most numerous of which is that of the Methodists, have no other view than the maintenance of the severe purity of Christianity in the conduct of life. Their renunciation of pleasures of every kind, their persevering zeal in well-doing, announce to mankind that there are in the Gospel

the germs of sentiments and of virtues still more fruitful than all those that we have seen displayed even to the present day, and the sacred flowers of which are perhaps destined for future generations.

In a religious country also good morals necessarily exist, and yet the passions of the English are very strong ; for it is a great error to believe them of a calm disposition, because they have habitually cold manners. No men are more impetuous in great things, but they resemble the dogs sent by Porus to Alexander, who disdained to fight against any other adversary than the lion. The English abandon their apparent tranquillity and give themselves up to extremes of all kinds. They go in quest of danger ; they wish to attempt extraordinary things ; they desire strong emotions. Activity of imagination, and the restraint of their habits, render such emotions necessary to them but these habits themselves are founded on a great respect for morality.

The freedom of the newspapers, which some persons would represent to us as contrary to delicacy of morals, is one of the most efficacious causes of that delicacy : every thing in England is so well known, and so discussed, that truth in all matters

is unavoidable ; and one might submit to the judgment of the English public as to that of a friend, who should enter into the details of your life, into the shades of your character, to weigh every action, in the spirit of equity, agreeably to the situation of each individual. The greater the weight of public opinion in England, the greater boldness is necessary to act in violation of it. Accordingly the women who brave it, go to a daring length. But how rare are these violations of it, even in the highest class, the only one in which such examples can at times be cited. In the second rank, among the inhabitants of the country, we find nothing but conjugal attachment and private virtues, a domestic life entirely consecrated to the education of a numerous family, who, brought up in a complete conviction of the sacred nature of marriage, would not permit a light thought on this subject to enter the mind. As there are no convents in England, the daughters are commonly educated at the house of their parents ; and one can see by their information and their virtues, which of the two is better for a female, education on this plan, or on that which is practised in Italy.

“ At least,” it will be said, “ those trials for

divorce in which the most indecent discussions are admitted, are disgraceful." They cannot however be so, since the result is such as I have just mentioned. These trials are an old usage, and, in this point of view, certain people ought to defend them ; but, be this as it may, the dread of the scandal is a great restraint. And besides, people in England are not disposed as in France to make such subjects a topic of pleasantry. A degree of austerity, corresponding to the spirit of the early puritans, is displayed in these trials. The judges, as well as the spectators, come to them with a serious disposition, and the consequences are highly important, since the maintenance of the domestic virtues depends on them, and there is no liberty without these virtues. Now as the spirit of the age was not favourable to them, the useful ascendancy of these trials for divorce is a fortunate chance ; for chance there almost always is in the good or evil that can be produced by adhering to old usages, as occasionally they are suitable to the present time, and at other periods no longer applicable to it. Happy the country in which the misconduct of women can be punished with so much wisdom, without

frivolity, and without vengeance. They are permitted to have recourse to the protection of the man for whom they have sacrificed every thing ; but they are, in general, deprived of all the brilliant advantages of society. I know not whether legislation could invent any thing at once more effectual and more mild.

An indignant feeling will perhaps be excited by the practice of requiring a sum of money from the seducer of a woman. As every thing in England is stamped with a noble feeling, I will not lightly pass sentence on a custom of this nature, since it is preserved. It is necessary to punish in some way the trespasses of men against morals, since public opinion is in general too lax in regard to them, and no one will pretend that a heavy pecuniary loss is not a punishment. Moreover, the public sensation produced by these distressing trials renders it almost always a duty on the man to espouse the woman whom he has seduced ; and this obligation is a pledge that neither levity nor falsehood is mingled with the sentiments which men take on themselves to express. When in love there is nothing but love, its irregularities are both more rare and more excusable. It is, how-

ever, difficult to me to understand why the fine payable by the seducer should go to the husband : often, indeed, the husband does not accept it, but appropriates it to the poor. However, there is reason to think that two motives have given rise to this custom : one to furnish to a husband, when of a class without property, the means of educating his children, when the mother, whose duty it was, is lost to him ; the other, and this is a more essential point, to bring forward the husband in a case involving the misconduct of his wife, in order to examine if he be not culpable, in a similar way, in regard to her. In Scotland, infidelity on the part of the husband dissolves a marriage, like infidelity on the part of the wife, and in a free country a sentiment of duty always put the strong and the weak on a level.

In England all is constituted in such a way that the interest of each class, of each sex, of each individual, lies in conforming themselves to morality. Political liberty is the supreme instrument of this admirable combination. " Yes," it will still be said, " if you look at words and not at things ; the truth is, that the English are always governed by interest." As if there were any resemblance

between the interest that leads to virtue, and that which causes a deviation to vice! Doubtless, England is not a planet distinct from ours, in which personal advantage is not, as elsewhere, the spring of human action. Men cannot be governed by reckoning ^{always} on devotedness and sacrifices; but when the whole of the institutions of a country are such that there is an advantage in being upright, there results from it a certain habit of integrity which becomes engraven on every heart: it is transmitted by remembrance, the air we breathe is impregnated with it, and we are no longer under the necessity of reflecting on the inconveniences of every kind that would ensue from certain improprieties; the force of example is a sufficient preservative from them.

CHAPTER VI.

*Of Society in England, and of its Connexion
with social Order.*

IT is not probable that we shall ever see in any country, not even in France, such a society as we there enjoyed during the first two years of the Revolution, and at the period that preceded it. Foreigners, who flatter themselves with finding any thing of the kind in England, are much disappointed; for they often find there that time hangs heavy on their hands. Although that country contains the most enlightened men and the most interesting women, the enjoyments which society can procure are but rarely met with. When a foreigner understands English well, and is admitted to small circles composed of the superior men of the country, he tastes, if he be worthy of them, the most noble enjoyments which the communication of reflecting beings can afford; but it is not in these intellectual feasts that the society of England consists. People in London are

invited every day to vast assemblages where they elbow each other, as in the pit of a theatre. The women form the majority, and the crowd is, in general, so great that even their beauty has not room for display : still less can any pleasure of the mind be thought of. Considerable bodily vigour is required to cross the drawing rooms without being stifled, and to get back to one's carriage without accident ; but I do not well see that any other superiority is necessary in such a rout. Accordingly, serious men soon renounce the tax, which in England is called fashionable company ; and it is, it must be confessed, the most tiresome combination which can be formed out of such distinguished elements.

These assemblages arise from the necessity of admitting a very great number of persons into the circle of one's acquaintance. The list of visitors which an English lady receives is sometimes of twelve hundred persons. French society is infinitely more exclusive : the aristocratic spirit which regulated the formation of its circles was favourable to elegance and amusement, but nowise in correspondence with the nature of a free state. Thus, in frankly admitting that the pleasures of society

are found very rarely, and with great difficulty, in London, I shall examine if these pleasures are compatible with the social order of England. If they are not, the choice cannot be matter of doubt.

Men of large property in England generally discharge some public duty in their respective counties; and, from a wish to be returned to parliament, or to influence the election of their relations and friends, they pass eight or nine months in the country. The consequence is, that social habits are entirely suspended during two thirds of the year, and it is only by meeting very frequently that people form familiar and easy connexions. In the part of London where the higher circles reside, there are whole months in summer and autumn during which the town has the appearance of being visited by a contagion, such is the solitude that prevails. The meeting of parliament seldom takes place until January, and people do not come to London till that time. The men living much on their estates, pass half the day in riding or sporting; they come home fatigued, and think only of taking rest, or sometimes even of drinking, although the reports made of English manners, in this respect, are grossly exaggerated, particularly

if referred to the present time. However, such a mode of life does not fit people for the pleasures of society. The French being called neither by their business nor by their taste to live in the country, one might find at Paris, during the whole year, houses in which to enjoy very agreeable conversation; but the consequence also was, that Paris alone enjoyed existence in France, while in England political life is felt in every county. When the interests of the country come under the jurisdiction of every one, the most attractive kind of conversation is that of which public business is the object. Now in considering this subject, we do not so much regard the sprightliness of the manner, as the real importance of the things discussed. Often does a man, in other respects far from agreeable, captivate his hearers by the power of his reasoning and information. In France, the art of being agreeable lay in never exhausting a subject, and in never dwelling too long on those which were not interesting to women. In England women never come conspicuously forward in discourse. The men have not accustomed them to take a share in general conversation: when they leave the room

after dinner, conversation of this kind becomes more keen and animated. The mistress of a house does not, as among the French, think herself obliged to lead the conversation, and particularly to take care that it does not languish. People are quite resigned to this evil in English society; and it seems much easier to bear, than the necessity of taking a conspicuous part for the sake of re-animating the discourse. English women are extremely timid in this respect; for in a free country, men preserving their natural dignity, females feel themselves subordinate.

The case is not the same in an unlimited monarchy, such as existed in France. As nothing there was impracticable or determinate, the conquests made by elegance were unbounded, and women necessarily triumphed in contests of this kind. But in England what ascendancy could a woman, even the most amiable, exercise in the midst of popular elections, of the eloquence of parliament and the inflexibility of the law? Ministers have no idea that a woman could make application to them on any subject whatever, unless she had neither brother, son, nor husband, to undertake it. In the country of the greatest pub-

licity, state secrets are better kept than any where else. There are here no intermediates, if we may use the expression, between the newspapers and the ministerial cabinet ; and this cabinet is the most discreet in Europe. There is no example of a woman having known, or at least having told, what ought to have been kept secret. In a country where domestic manners are so regular, married men have no mistresses ; and it is only mistresses who dive into secrets, and particularly who reveal them.

Amongst the means of rendering society more animated, we must reckon coquetry : now this hardly exists in England, except among young men and women who may perhaps subsequently marry ; conversation gains nothing by it, but the reverse. Indeed so low in general is their tone of voice that these persons can scarcely hear each other : but the consequence is, that people are not married without being acquainted ; while in France, to save the tediousness of these timid amours, young girls were never introduced into company until their marriage had been concluded on by their parents. If there are in England women who deviate from their duty, it is with so much mystery, or with so

much publicity, that the desire of pleasing in company, of exhibiting their fascinations, of shining by grace and sprightliness of mind, has no connexion whatever with their conduct. In France the power of conversation led to every thing; in England talents of this kind are appreciated, but they are nowise useful to the ambition of those who possess them: public men and the people make a choice, among the candidates for power, of very different marks of superior faculties. The consequence is, that people neglect what is not useful, in this as in every thing else. The national character, moreover, being strongly turned towards reserve and timidity, a powerful motive is necessary to triumph over these habits, and this motive is found only in the importance of public discussions.

It is difficult to give a thorough explanation of what in England is called shyness, that is, the embarrassment which confines to the bottom of the heart the expressions of natural benevolence; for one often meets the coldest manners in persons who would show themselves most generous towards you, if you stood in need of their aid. The English are as far from being at ease among each

other, as with foreigners ; they do not speak till after having been introduced to each other ; familiarity becomes established only after long acquaintance. In England one scarcely ever sees the younger branches live after their marriage in the same house with their parents ; home is the prevailing taste of the English, and this inclination has perhaps contributed to make them detest the political system which, in other countries, permits exile or arbitrary arrest. Each family has its separate dwelling ; and London consists of a vast number of houses, of small size, shut as close as boxes, and into which it is not much more easy to penetrate. There are not even many brothers or sisters who go to dine at each other's houses, without invitation. This formality does not render life very amusing ; and in the taste of the English for travelling, the motive is partly a desire to withdraw from the constraint of their customs, as well as the necessity of escaping from the fogs of their climate.

In every country the pleasures of society concern only the first class, that is, the unoccupied class ; who, having a great deal of leisure for amusement, attach much importance to it. But

in England, where every one has his career and his employment, it is natural for men of rank as for men of business in other countries, to prefer physical relaxation,—walks, the country, in short, pleasure of any kind, in which the mind is at rest ; to conversation, in which one must think and speak with almost as much care as in the most serious business. Besides, the happiness of the English being founded on domestic life, it would not suit them that their wives should, as in France, make a kind of family selection of a certain number of persons constantly brought together.

We must not, however, deny that with all these honourable motives are mixed certain defects, the natural results of all large associations of men. In the first place, although in England there is much more pride than vanity, a good deal of stress is laid on marking by manners the ranks which most of the institutions tend to bring on a level. There prevails a certain degree of egotism in the habits, and sometimes in the character. Wealth, and the tastes created by wealth, are the cause of it : people are not disposed to submit to inconvenience in any thing ; so great is their power of being comfortable in every thing. Family ties, so intimate as regards

marriage, are far from intimate in other relations, because the entails on property render the eldest sons too independent of their parents, and separate also the interest of the younger brothers from those of the inheritor of the fortune. The entails necessary to the support of the peerage ought not, perhaps, to be extended to other classes of land-holders ; it is a remnant of the feudal system, of which one ought, if possible, to lessen the vexatious consequences. From this it happens likewise that most of the women are without portions, and that in a country where the institution of convents cannot exist, there are a number of young ladies, whom their mothers have a great desire to get married, and who may, with reason, be uneasy as to their prospects. This inconvenience, produced by the unequal partition of fortunes, is sensibly felt in society : for the unmarried men take up too much of the attention of the women, and wealth in general, far from conducing to the pleasure of social intercourse, is necessarily hurtful to it. A very considerable fortune is requisite to receive one's friends in the country, which is, however, the most agreeable mode of living in England : fortune is necessary for all the relations of society ; not that people are

vain of a sumptuous mode of life ; but the importance attached by every body to the kind of enjoyment termed comfortable, would prevent any person from venturing, as was formerly the case in the most agreeable societies in Paris, to make up for a bad dinner by amusing anecdotes.

In all countries the pretensions of young persons of fashion are engrafted on national defects : they exhibit a caricature of these defects, but a caricature has always some traits of an original. In France the pretenders to elegance endeavoured to strike, and tried to dazzle, by all possible means, good or bad. In England this same class of persons wish to be distinguished as disdainful, indifferent, and completely satiated of every thing. This is abundantly disagreeable ; but in what country of the world is not foppery a resource of vanity to conceal natural mediocrity ? Among a people where every thing bears a decided aspect, as in England, contrasts are the more striking. Fashion has remarkable influence on the habits of life, and yet there is no nation in which one finds so many examples of what is called eccentricity, that is, a mode of life altogether original, and which makes no account of the opinion of others. The differ

ence between the men who live under the control of others and those who think and act for themselves is recognized every where ; but this opposition of character is rendered more conspicuous by the singular mixture of timidity and independence remarkable among the English. They do nothing by halves, and they pass all at once from a slavish adherence to the most minute usages, to the most complete indifference as to what the world may say of them. Yet the dread of ridicule is one of the principal causes of the coldness that prevails in English society : people are never accused of insipidity for keeping silence ; and as they do not require of you to animate the conversation, one is more impressed by the risks to which one exposes oneself by speaking, than by the awkwardness of silence. In the country where people have the greatest attachment to the liberty of the press, and where they care the least for the attacks of the newspapers, the sarcasms of society are very much dreaded. Newspapers are considered the volunteers of political parties, and, in this, as in other respects, the English are very fond of keeping up a conflict ; but slander and irony, when they take place in company, irritate highly the

delicacy of the women and the pride of the men. This is the reason that people come as little forward as possible in the presence of others. Animation and grace necessarily lose greatly by this. In no country of the world have reserve and taciturnity ever, I believe, been carried so far as in certain societies in England ; and if one falls into such companies, it is easy to conceive how a disrelish of life may take possession of those who find themselves confined to them. But out of these frozen circles, what satisfaction of mind and heart may not be found in English society, when one is happily placed there ? The favour or dislike of ministers and the court are absolutely of no account in the relations of life ; and you would make an Englishman blush, were you to appear to think of the office which he holds, or of the influence he may possess. A sentiment of pride always makes him think that these circumstances neither add to nor deduct in the slightest degree from his personal merit. Political disappointments cannot have any influence on the pleasures enjoyed in fashionable society ; the party of Opposition are as brilliant there as the ministerialists : fortune, rank, intellect, talents, virtues, are shared among them ;

and never do either of the two think of drawing near to or keeping at a distance from a person by those calculations of ambition which have always prevailed in France. To quit one's friends because they are out of power, and to draw near to them because they possess it, is a kind of tactics almost unknown in England; and if the applause of society does not lead to public enjoyment, at least the liberty of society is not impaired by combinations foreign to the pleasures which may be tasted there. One finds there almost invariably the security and the truth which form the bases of all enjoyment, because they form their security. You have not to dread those perpetual broils which, in other countries, fill life with disquietude. What you possess in point of connexion and friendship, you can lose only by your own fault, and you never have reason to doubt the expressions of benevolence addressed to you, for they will be surpassed by the actual performance, and consecrated by duration. Truth, above all, is one of the most distinguished qualities of the English character. The publicity that prevails in business, the discussions by which people arrive at the bottom of every thing, have doubtless contributed to this

habit of strict truth which cannot exist but in a country where dissimulation leads to nothing but the mortification of being exposed.

It has been much repeated on the Continent, that the English are unpolite, and a certain habit of independence, a great aversion to restraint, may have given rise to this opinion. But I know no politeness, no protection, so delicate as that of the English towards women in every circumstance of life. Is there question of danger, of trouble, of a service to be rendered, there is nothing that they neglect to aid the weaker sex. From the seamen who, amidst the storm, support your tottering steps, to English gentlemen of the highest rank, never does a woman find herself exposed to any difficulty whatever, without being supported; and every where do we find that happy mixture which is characteristic of England, a republican austerity in domestic life, and a chivalrous spirit in the relations of society.

A quality not less amiable in the English is their disposition to enthusiasm. This people can see nothing remarkable without encouraging it by the most flattering praises. One acts then very rightly in going to England, in whatever state of mis-

fortune one is placed, if conscious of possessing in one's-self any thing that is truly distinguished. But if one arrives there, like most of the rich idlers of Europe, who travel to pass a carnival in Italy, and a spring in London, there is no country that more disappoints expectation; and we shall certainly quit it without suspecting that we have seen the finest model of social order, and the only one which for a long time supported our hopes of human nature.

I shall never forget the society of Lord Grey, Lord Lansdowne, and Lord Harrowby. I cite their names because they all three belong to different parties, or to shades of different parties, which comprise almost all the political opinions of England. There are other names which I should, in like manner, have had much pleasure in mentioning.

Lord Grey is one of the most ardent friends of liberty in the House of Peers: the nobleness of his birth, of his figure, and of his manners, preserve him most decidedly from that kind of vulgar popularity which some are eager to attribute to the partisans of the rights of nations; and I would defy any one not to feel for him every kind of

respect. His parliamentary speaking is generally admired. To eloquence of language he joins a force of interior conviction, which makes his audience participate in his feelings. Political questions produce emotion in him, because a generous enthusiasm is the source of his opinions. As in company he always expresses himself with calmness and simplicity on topics that interest him the most, it is by the paleness of his look that we sometimes become aware of the keenness of his feelings : but, it is without desiring either to conceal or display the affections of his soul, that he speaks on subjects for which he would lay down his life. It is well known that he has twice refused to be prime minister, because he could not agree in certain points with the prince who was ready to appoint him. Whatever diversity of opinion there may be on the motives of that resolution, nothing appears more natural in England than to decline being minister. I would not then notice the refusal of Lord Grey, had his acceptance implied the slightest renunciation of his political principles ; but the scruples, by which he was determined, were carried too far to be approved by every body. And yet the men of his party, while

they censured him in this respect, did not think it possible to accept without him any of the offices that were offered to them.

The house of Lord Grey offers an example of those domestic virtues so rare elsewhere in the highest class. His wife, who lives only for him, is worthy, by her sentiments, of the honour that Heaven has allotted her in uniting her with such a man. Thirteen children, still young, are educated by their parents, and live with them, during eight months of the year, at their country seat in the extremity of England, where they have hardly ever any other variety than their family circle and their habitual reading. I happened to be one evening, in London, in this sanctuary of the most noble and affecting virtues; Lady Grey had the politeness to ask her daughters to play music; and four of these young persons, of angelic candour and grace, played duets on the harp and piano, with a harmony that was admirable, and that showed a great habit of practising together; their father listened to them with affecting sensibility. The virtues which he displays in his family afford a pledge of the purity of the vows that he makes for his country.

Lord Lansdowne is also a member of the Opposition ; but, less decided in his political opinions, it is by a profound study of administration and finance that he has already served, and will still serve his country. Affluent and high in rank, young and singularly fortunate in the choice of his domestic partner, none of these advantages dispose him to indolence ; and it is by his superior merit that he stands in the foremost rank in a country where nothing can exempt a man from owing distinction to personal exertion. At his seat at Bowood, I have met the most delightful assemblage of enlightened men that England, and consequently the world, can offer. Sir James Mackintosh, pointed out by public opinion to continue Hume, and to surpass him by writing the history of the constitutional liberty of England, a man of such universal information and such brilliancy of conversation that the English quote him with pride to foreigners, to prove that, in this respect also, they are capable of taking a lead ; Sir Samuel Romilly, the luminary and honour of that English jurisprudence which in itself is the object of the respect of all mankind ; poets, literary men not less distinguished in their career than

statesmen in politics ; all contributed to the pure splendour of such a society, and of the illustrious master of the house. For in England the culture of intellect and the practice of morality are almost always combined ; in fact to a certain degree they do not admit of separation.

Lord Harrowby, president of the Privy Council, is naturally of the ministerial or Tory party ; but in the same way that Lord Grey has all the dignity of aristocracy in his character, Lord Harrowby partakes, by his mental labours, of all the knowledge of the liberal party. He knows foreign literature, and that of France in particular, somewhat better than ourselves. I had the honour of seeing him sometimes amidst the most critical moments of the war before last ; and while in other quarters one is obliged to adopt set words and manners before a minister, when public affairs are discussed, Lord Harrowby would have felt himself offended had people considered him otherwise than personally, when conversing on questions of general interest. We see neither at his table, nor at that of the other English ministers, any of those subordinate flatterers who surround people of consequence in an absolute monarchy. There

is in England no class in which such men could be found, nor any men in office who would listen to them. As a speaker, Lord Harrowby is distinguished for the purity of his language, and the brilliant irony of which he knows how to make an appropriate use. Accordingly he justly attaches much more importance to his personal reputation than to his temporary office. Lord Harrowby, seconded by his intelligent partner, exhibits in his house the most complete example of what a conversation may be, when literary and political by turns; and when both subjects are treated with equal ease.

In France we have a number of women who have acquired reputation merely by the power of conversation, or by writing letters which resembled conversation. Madame de Sévigné takes a decided lead in this department; but subsequently Madame de Tencin, Madame du Deffant, Madlle. de l'Es-pinasse, and several others, have acquired celebrity by their mental attractions. I have already said that the state of society in England hardly admitted of distinction in this way, and that examples of it were not to be cited. There are, however, several women remarkable as writers; Miss

Edgeworth, Madame D'Arblay, formerly Miss Burney, Mrs. Hannah Moore, Mrs. Inchbald, Mrs. Opie, Miss Baillie, are admired in England, and read with avidity by the French ; but they live in general in great retirement, and their influence is confined to their books. Were we to cite a woman uniting in the highest degree that which constitutes the strength and moral beauty of the English character, it would be necessary to seek her in history.

Lady Russel, the wife of the illustrious Lord Russel, who was beheaded under Charles II for opposing the encroachments of royal power, seems to me the true model of an Englishwoman in all her perfection. The court that tried Lord Russel, asked him what person he desired to serve him as secretary during his trial ; he made choice of Lady Russel, *because*, said he, *she unites the information of a man to the tender affection of a wife*. Lady Russel, who adored her husband, sustained, nevertheless, the presence of his iniquitous judges, and the barbarous sophistry of their questions, with all the presence of mind with which the hope of being useful inspired her ; but in vain. When the sentence of death was pronounced, Lady

Russel threw herself at the feet of Charles II, imploring him in the name of Lord Southampton, whose daughter she was, and who had devoted himself for the cause of Charles I. But the remembrance of services rendered to the father had no effect on the son, whose frivolity did not prevent his being cruel. Lord Russel, in parting from his wife to go to the scaffold, pronounced these memorable words : , “ Now the bitterness of death is past.” There are indeed affections of which the whole of our existence may be composed.

Letters written by Lady Russel, after the death of her husband, have been published, and bear the stamp of the deepest affliction, moderated by religious resignation. She lived to bring up her children ; she lived because she did not think it lawful to give herself a voluntary death. By weeping continually, she became blind, and the remembrance of him she had so loved was ever alive in her heart. She had one moment of joy when liberty was established in 1688 ; when the sentence pronounced against Lord Russel was repealed, and his opinions triumphed. The partisans of William III, and Queen Anne herself,

often consulted Lady Russel on public affairs, as having preserved some sparks of the light of Lord Russel. It was by that title she answered their call, and, amidst the deep mourning of her soul, interested herself in the noble cause for which the blood of her husband had been shed. She appeared always the widow of Lord Russel, and it is by the constancy of that feeling that she claims admiration. Such, again would a true Englishwoman be if a scene so tragical, a trial so terrible, could be renewed in our days, and if, thanks to liberty, such calamities were not removed for ever. The duration of the sorrows caused by the loss of those we love, often absorbs, in England, the life of persons by whom they are felt. If women there have not personally active habits, they live so much more strongly in the objects of their attachment. The dead are not forgotten in that country, where the human soul possesses all its beauty ; and that honourable constancy which struggles with the instability of this world, exalts the feelings of the heart to the rank of things eternal.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the Conduct of the English Government out of England.

IN expressing, as much as I have been able, my admiration for the English nation, I have never ceased to attribute its superiority over the rest of Europe to its political institutions. It remains for us to offer a melancholy proof of this assertion ; it is that, in things where the constitution does not command, the English government justly incurs the same reproaches which absolute power has ever deserved on earth. If, by some circumstances which are not met with in history, a nation had possessed, a hundred years before the rest of Europe, the art of printing, the mariner's compass, and, what is more valuable, a religion which is only a sanction of the purest morality, that nation would certainly be far superior to those who had not obtained similar advantages. The same may be said of the benefits of a free constitution ; but

these benefits are necessarily limited to the country which that constitution governs. When Englishmen exercise military or diplomatic employments on the Continent, it is still probable that men brought up in the atmosphere of all the virtues will participate in them individually. But it is possible that power, which corrupts almost all men, when they go beyond the circle of the dominion of law, may have misled many Englishmen, when they had to render an account of their conduct abroad to ministers only, and not to the nation. In truth, that nation, so enlightened in other things, is ill-informed of what passes on the Continent: it lives in the interior of its own country, if we may use the expression, like every man in his own house; and it is only after a length of time that it learns the history of Europe, in which her ministers often act too great a part, by means of its blood and treasure. The inference is, that every country, at every time, should defend itself from the influence of foreigners, be they who they may; for the nations who are the most free at home, may have rulers very jealous of the prosperity of other states, and may become

the oppressors of their neighbours, if they find a favourable opportunity.

Let us, however, examine how far there is truth in what is alleged of the conduct of the English out of their country. When, unfortunately for themselves, they were obliged to send troops to the Continent, those troops observed the most perfect discipline. The disinterestedness of the English army, and of its commanders, cannot be disputed; we have seen them paying in an enemy's country more regularly than the enemy paid their own countrymen, and never do they neglect to blend the cares of humanity with the calamities of war. Sir Sidney Smith, in Egypt, protected the envoys of the French army in his own tent; and often declared to his allies, the Turks, that he would perish sooner than suffer the rights of nations to be violated towards his enemies. During the retreat of General Moore in Spain, English officers threw themselves into a river where some Frenchmen were on the point of drowning, in order to save them from a danger to which they were exposed by accident, and not by arms. In short, there is no occasion

in which the army of the Duke of Wellington, directed by the magnanimity and the conscientious severity of its illustrious chief, has not sought to relieve the inhabitants of the countries through which it passed. The splendour of English bravery, we must acknowledge, has never been sullied by cruelty or by pillage.

The military force transported to the colonies, and particularly to India, ought not to be made responsible for the acts of authority of which there may be reason to complain. The regular troops obey passively in countries considered as subjected, and which are not protected by the constitution. But in the colonies, no more than elsewhere, can the English officers be accused of depredation; it is the persons holding civil employments who are reproached with enriching themselves by unlawful means. In fact, the conduct of these persons during the first years of the conquest of India deserves the highest blame, and furnishes another proof of what we cannot too often repeat, that every man charged with the command of others, if he is not himself subject to the law, obeys nothing but his passions. But since the trial of Mr. Hastings, the attention

of the English nation being directed towards the frightful abuses which till then had been tolerated in India, the public spirit has obliged government to attend to them. Lord Cornwallis carried his virtues, and Lord Wellesley his knowledge, to a country necessarily unhappy, because subjected to a foreign dominion. But the good performed by these two governors is felt every day more and more. There existed no courts of justice in India to which an appeal could be made from the injustice of men in office; the proportion of taxes was not at ~~any~~^{any} fixed. Courts are now established according to the English form; some natives even occupy places of the second rank; the taxes are fixed by a regular scale, and cannot be augmented. If persons in office enrich themselves now, it is because their appointments are very considerable. Three fourths of the revenue of the country are consumed in the country itself; commerce is free in the interior; the corn trade in particular, which had given rise to so cruel a monopoly, is now on a footing more favourable to the natives than to government.

England has adopted the principle of govern-

ing the inhabitants of the country according to their own laws. But the very toleration by which the English distinguish themselves so honourably from their predecessors in the government of India, whether Mahometans or Christians, obliges them to employ no other arms than those of persuasion, to destroy prejudices which have taken root for thousands of years. The difference of castes is still humiliating to human nature, and the power of fanaticism is such, that the English have not hitherto been able to prevent women from burning themselves alive after the death of their husbands. The only triumph which they have obtained over superstition has been that of preventing mothers from throwing their children into the Ganges, in order to send them to paradise. Respect for an oath is carefully inculcated on the Hindoos, and hopes are still entertained of being able to diffuse Christianity among them at some future time. Public education is very carefully attended to by the English in authority, and it was at Madras that Dr. Bell established his first school. In short, it may be hoped that the example of the English will form those nations sufficiently to enable them to give

themselves one day an independent political existence. Every enlightened man in England would exult in the loss of India, if it took place in consequence of improvements introduced into that country by good government. It is one of the prejudices of the Continent to believe the power of the English connected with the possession of India: that oriental empire is almost an affair of luxury, and contributes more to splendour than to real strength. England lost her American provinces, and her commerce has been increased by it. Were the colonies that remain to her to declare themselves independent, she would still possess her naval and commercial superiority; because she has in herself a principle of action, of progress, and of duration, which places her always above exterior circumstances.

It has been said on the Continent, that the slave trade was suppressed in England from political calculation, in order to ruin the colonies of other countries by that abolition. Nothing is more false in every point of view. The English parliament, pressed by Mr. Wilberforce, debated this question during twenty years, in which humanity struggled with what apparently was in-

terest. The merchants of Liverpool, and of various parts of England, demanded vehemently the continuance of the trade. The planters talked of that abolition, as certain persons in France express themselves at present, on the liberty of the press, and political rights. If you would believe the planters, that person must be a Jacobin who could wish to put an end to the buying and selling of men. Maledictions against philosophy, in the name of that superior wisdom which pretends to rise above it, by maintaining things as they are, even when they are abominable; sarcasms without number on philanthropy towards the Africans, or fraternity with negroes; in short, the whole arsenal of personal interest was poured forth in England, as elsewhere, by the planters, by that species of privileged persons, who, fearing a diminution of their income, defended it in the name of the public good. Nevertheless, when England pronounced the abolition of the slave trade, in 1806, almost all the colonies of Europe were in her hands, and if ever it could be injurious to be just, it was on this occasion. There has since happened, what always will happen—a resolution commanded by religion and

philosophy has not produced the least political inconvenience. In a short space of time good treatment, by increasing the number of the slaves, has made up for the wretched cargoes imported every year, and justice has found her place, because the true nature of things is always accordant with her.

The English ministry, then of the Whig party, had proposed a bill for the abolition of the slave trade; they gave in their resignation to the King, because they had not obtained from him the emancipation of the Catholics. But Lord Holland, the nephew of Mr. Fox, and heir of the principles, of the knowledge, and of the friends of his uncle, reserved to himself the noble satisfaction of still carrying to the House of Peers the King's sanction to the act for the abolition of the slave trade. Mr. Clarkson, one of the virtuous men who laboured during twenty years with Mr. Wilberforce, for the accomplishment of this eminently Christian work, in giving an account of this sitting, adds, that at the moment when the bill received the royal assent, a ray of sunshine, as if to celebrate this affecting triumph, darted from the clouds, which that day covered the sky.

Certainly, if it were tedious to hear so much spoken of the fine weather which was said to consecrate the military parades of Bonaparte, pious minds may surely be permitted to hope for a benevolent token from their Creator, while they are burning on his altar that incense which is most pleasing to him, the doing of good to mankind. Such was on this occasion the sole policy of England, and when parliament, after public debates, adopts any decision whatever, its principal aim is almost always the benefit of humanity. But can it be denied, it will be said, that England is encroaching and domineering abroad? I now come to her faults, or rather to those of her ministry; for the party, and a very numerous one it is, that disapproves the conduct of government in this respect, cannot be accused of it.

There is a people who will one day be very great, I mean the Americans. One stain only obscures the perfect splendour of reason that vivifies that country; slavery still subsists in the southern provinces; but when the Congress shall have found a remedy for that evil, how shall we be able to refuse the most profound respect to the

institutions of the United States? Whence comes it then, that many English allow themselves to speak with disdain of such a people? "They are shop-keepers," they repeat. And how did the courtiers of Louis XIV talk of the English themselves? The retainers of Bonaparte's court also, what did they say? Do not the nobility that are unemployed, or that are employed only in the service of a prince, disdain that hereditary magistracy of the English which is founded solely on its utility to the nation at large. The Americans, it is true, declared war against England at a time, which, with respect to Europe, was very ill-chosen; for England then resisted alone the power of Bonaparte. But America on this occasion looked only to what concerned her own interest; and she can certainly not be suspected of having wished to favour the imperial system. Nations have not yet attained that noble feeling of humanity which should extend itself from one part of the world to the other. As neighbours they feel a mutual hatred; while those at a distance are unknown to each other. But could that ignorance of the affairs of Europe, which impelled the Americans to declare war unseasonably against England,

justify the burning of Washington? It was not warlike establishments that were destroyed; but peaceful edifices, sacred to national representation, to public instruction, to the transplantation of arts and sciences into a country recently overgrown with forests, and conquered from savage nature solely by the labour of man. What is there more honourable for mankind than this new world, which has established itself without the prejudices of the old; this new world, where religion subsists in all its fervour, without needing the support of the state to maintain it; where the law commands by the respect which it inspires, without being enforced by any military power? It is possible, alas! that Europe may be destined, like Asia, to exhibit one day the spectacle of a stationary civilization, which, not having been able to advance, has become degraded. But does it thence follow that England, old and free, should refuse the tribute of admiration inspired by the progress of America, because former resentments, and some features of resemblance, excite a family hatred between the two countries?

Finally, what will posterity say of the recent conduct of the English ministry towards France?

I confess I cannot approach this subject without being seized with an inward tremor, and yet, were it necessary, I would not hesitate to declare, that if one of the two nations, France or England, must be annihilated, it would be better that that country which can reckon a hundred years of liberty, a hundred years of knowledge, a hundred years of virtue, should preserve the trust which Providence has placed in its hands. But does this cruel alternative exist? And why has not a rivalry of so many ages led the English government to think, that it is a duty of chivalry, as well as of justice, not to oppress that France, which in her contests with England, during the whole course of their common history animated her efforts by a generous jealousy? The opposition has been at all times more liberal, and better informed respecting the affairs of the Continent, than the ministerial party: it ought, of course, to have been entrusted with the conclusion of peace. Moreover, it was the rule in England, that peace ought not to be signed by the same ministers who had conducted the war. That irritation against the enemy, which serves to carry on war with vigour, leads, it has been found,

to an abuse of victory; and this manner of reasoning is no less just than favourable to real peace, which must not merely be signed, but must be implanted in the mind and heart. Unhappily the party of opposition had committed the error of supporting Bonaparte. It would have been more natural to have seen his despotic system defended by the friends of power, and opposed by the friends of liberty. But the question became perplexed in England, as every where else; the partisans of the principles of the Revolution thought it their duty to support a tyranny for life, to prevent, in various places, the return of more lasting despotism. But they did not see that one kind of absolute power opens the way for all others; and that by again giving to the French the habits of servitude, Bonaparte had destroyed the energy of public spirit. One peculiarity of the English constitution, which we have already noticed, is the necessity in which the opposition believe themselves placed, of opposing the ministry on all possible grounds. This habit, applicable only to ordinary circumstances, ought to have been relinquished at a crisis when the contest was so national, that even the ex-

istence of the country depended on its issue. The opposition ought to have frankly joined government against Bonaparte; for the government, by opposing him with perseverance, nobly fulfilled its duty. The opposition made its stand on the desire of peace, which is, in general, very acceptable to the people; but, on this occasion, the good sense and energy of the English impelled them to war. They felt that it was impossible to treat with Bonaparte; and all that the ministry and Lord Wellington did to overthrow him, contributed powerfully to the repose and greatness of England. But at this period, when the nation had reached the summit of prosperity, at this period, when the English ministry deserved a vote of thanks for the part it could claim in the triumph of its heroes, the fatality which seizes all men who have reached the height of power, marked the treaty of Paris with the seal of reprobation.

The English ministry had already had the misfortune to be represented at the Congress of Vienna, by a man whose private virtues are highly worthy of esteem, but who has done more harm to the cause of nations than any diplomatist of

the Continent. An Englishman who reviles liberty is a false friend, more dangerous than strangers, since he seems to speak of what he knows, and to do the honours of what he possesses. The speeches of Lord Castlereagh in parliament are stamped with a kind of freezing irony, singularly pernicious when applied to all that is dignified in this world. For most of those who defend generous sentiments are easily discouraged when a minister in power treats their wishes as chimerical, when he makes a mockery of liberty, as of perfect love, and puts on the appearance of an indulgent air towards those who cherish it by imputing to them nothing but an innocent folly.

The deputies of several countries of Europe, at present weak, but formerly independent, came to solicit some rights, some securities from the representative of the power which they adored as free. They returned with an anguished heart, not knowing whether Bonaparte, or the most respectable nation in the world, had done them most lasting mischief. Hereafter their conferences will be published, and history can hardly present a more remarkable document. “What!” said they

to the English minister, "does not the prosperity, the glory of your country arise from this constitution, some principles of which we demand, when you are pleased to dispose of us for this pretended balance of which we form one of the make-weights in your scale?" "Yes," they were answered, with a sarcastic smile, "liberty is a usage of England; but it is not suitable to other countries." The only one among kings, or among men, that ever put to the torture not his enemies but his friends, has distributed, according to his good pleasure, the scaffold, the galleys, and the prison among citizens, who, having fought in defence of their country under the standard of England, claimed her support as having, by the generous avowal of Lord Wellington, powerfully aided his efforts. Did England interfere for their protection? The North Americans would willingly support the Americans of Mexico and Peru, whose love for independence must have increased when they have seen torture and the Inquisition re-established at Madrid. Well, what dreads the Congress of the North in succouring its brethren of the South? the alliance of England with Spain. In all directions the influence

of the English government is dreaded, precisely in a contrary sense to the support which the oppressed have a right to hope from it.

But let us return, with all our soul and all our strength, to that France which alone we know. "During twenty-five years," it is said, "she has incessantly tormented Europe by her democratic excesses and her military despotism. England has suffered cruelly by her continual attacks, and the English have made immense sacrifices to defend Europe. It is perfectly just that in her turn France should expiate the evil of which she has been the cause." Every thing in these accusations is true, except the conclusion that is drawn from them. Of what use is the law of retaliation in general, and above all, the law of retaliation exercised against a nation? Is a people to-day what it was yesterday? Does not a new and innocent generation come to replace that which has been found guilty? Will you comprise in the same proscription women, children, old men, even the victims of the tyranny that has been overthrown? the unhappy conscripts, concealed in woods to escape the wars of Bonaparte, but who, when forced to carry arms, con-

ducted themselves like intrepid warriors: the fathers of families ruined already by the sacrifices they have made to purchase the exemption of their sons? Do so many classes of men, on whom public misfortune presses equally, although they have certainly not borne an equal share in the fault, —do they deserve to suffer on account of a few? If in a question of political opinion it be hardly practicable to try one man with equity, how then can a nation be tried? The conduct of Bonaparte towards Prussia was taken as a model in the second treaty of Paris; in pursuance of which fortresses and provinces were occupied by one hundred and fifty thousand foreign soldiers. Is this the way to persuade the French that Bonaparte was unjust, and that they ought to hate him? They would have been better convinced of it, if his doctrine had in no respect been followed. And what did the proclamation of the Allies promise? Peace to France so soon as Bonaparte should cease to be her chief. Ought not the promise of powers, whose decisions were free, to be as sacred as the oaths of the French army pronounced in the presence of foreigners? And because the ministers of Europe commit the error of placing in the

island of Elba a General, the sight of whom cannot but excite the emotions of his soldiers, must enormous contributions exhaust the poor during five years? And, what is still more grievous, must foreigners humiliate the French, as the French humiliated other nations; that is, provoke in the soul of Frenchmen, the same feelings which raised up Europe against them? Is it supposed that this undue punishment of a nation, formerly so strong, is likely to be as effectual as the chastisement inflicted on striplings at school? Certainly, if France allows herself to be instructed in this manner; if she learns humility towards foreigners when they are the stronger party, after having made an abuse of victory when she had triumphed over them, she will have deserved her fate.

But some persons will still say, what then was, to be done to restrain a nation always prone to conquest, and which had taken back its former chief only in the hope of again enslaving Europe? I have mentioned in the preceding chapters what I consider to be incontestable, that is, that the French nation will never be sincerely tranquil, until she shall have secured the object of her efforts,

a constitutional monarchy. But in putting aside for a moment this view of the case, was not the dissolution of the army, the carrying off the artillery, the levying contributions, a sufficient assurance that France, thus weakened, would neither be desirous nor able to go beyond her limits? Is it not clear to every observer that the hundred and fifty thousand men who occupy France have but two objects, either to partition her territory, or to prescribe laws for her interior government. Partition her territory! Alas! since policy committed the human sacrifice of Poland, the mangled remains of that unhappy country still agitate Europe; its wrecks are incessantly rekindled to serve it as firebrands. Is it to strengthen the present government that a hundred and fifty thousand soldiers occupy our territory? Government has more effectual means of maintaining itself; for as it is destined to be one day supported by Frenchmen only, the foreign troops who remain in France, the exorbitant contributions which they exact, excite daily a vague discontent which is not always directed to the proper objects.

I willingly admit, however, that England as well as Europe had a right to desire the return of

the former dynasty of France; and that, in particular, the high degree of wisdom evinced by the King in the first year of his restoration, rendered it a duty to make him a reparation for the cruel return of Bonaparte. But ought not the English ministers, who know better than any ministry whatever, by the history of their country, the effects of a long revolution on the public mind, ought they not to maintain constitutional securities with as much care as they maintain the ancient dynasty? Since they brought back the royal family, ought they not to be watchful that the rights of the nation should be as well respected as those of legitimacy? Is there but one family in France, although that family be royal? And ought the engagements taken by that family towards twenty-five millions of persons to be broken for the sake of pleasing a few ultra-royalists? * Shall the name of the character be still pronounced at a time when there is not a shadow of the liberty of the press; when the English

* All this was written during the session of 1815, and it is known that no one was more eager than Madame de Staël to do homage to the beneficial effects of the *ordonnance* of the 5th of September of that year.—(*Note of the Editors.*)

newspapers cannot penetrate into France; when thousands of individuals are imprisoned without examination; when most of the military men brought to trial are condemned to death by extraordinary tribunals, by prevotal courts, by courts martial composed of the very men against whom the accused have fought during twenty-five years; when most of the forms are violated in these trials, council interrupted or reprimanded; in short, when arbitrary rule prevails every where, and the Charter nowhere, though it ought to be defended as zealously as the throne, since it was the safeguard of the nation? Could it be pretended that the election of the deputies who suspended that Charter was regular? Do we not know that twenty persons named by the prefects were sent into each electoral college to make choice there of the enemies of every free institution as pretended representatives of a nation which, since 1789, has been invariable only on one single point, the hatred that it has shown for their power? A hundred and eighty Protestants were massacred in the department of the Gard, without a single man having suffered death in punishment of these crimes, without the terror

caused by these assassinations having permitted the courts to condemn them. It was very readily asserted that those who perished were Bonapartists, as if it were not also necessary to prevent Bonapartists from being massacred. But this imputation was likewise as false as all those which are commonly cast upon victims. The man who has not been tried, is innocent; still more the man who is assassinated; still more the women who have perished in these bloody scenes. The murderers, in their atrocious songs, pointed out for the poignard those who profess the same religion as the English, and the most enlightened half of Europe. This English ministry, which has re-established the papal throne, sees the Protestants threatened in France; and far from coming to their aid, adopts against them those political pretexts which the parties have employed against each other from the beginning of the Revolution. An end should be put to the argument of force which might be applied in turn to the opposite factions by merely changing proper names. Would the English government now have the same antipathy for the worship of the reformers as for republics? Bonaparte also was in

many respects of this way of thinking. The inheritance of his principles is fallen to certain diplomatists, like the conquests of Alexander to his generals; but conquests, however much to be condemned, are better than a doctrine founded on the degradation of mankind.

Will the English ministry still be permitted to say that it considers it a duty not to interfere in the interior affairs of France? Must it not be interdicted from such an excuse? I ask it in the name of the English people; in the name of that nation whose first virtue is sincerity, and which is unconsciously led astray into political perfidy. Can we repress the laugh of bitterness when we hear men, who have twice disposed of the fate of France, urge this hypocritical pretext only to avoid doing her a service, to avoid restoring to the Protestants the security that is due to them, to avoid demanding the sincere execution of the constitutional charter? for the friends of liberty are also the brethren of the English people in religion. What, Lord Wellington is officially charged by the powers of Europe with superintending France, since he is charged to answer for her tranquillity; the note that invests him

with, that power is published ; in that same note the allied powers have declared, and the declaration is honourable to them, that they considered the principles of the constitutional Charter to be those that ought to govern France ; a hundred and fifty thousand men are under the orders of him to whom such a dictatorship is granted ; and the English government will still come forward and say that it cannot interfere in our affairs ? Lord Castlereagh, who, in his capacity of Secretary of State, had declared, in the House of Commons, several weeks before the battle of Waterloo,* that England did not in any manner pretend to impose a government upon France, the same man, in the same place, declares the following year† that if, at the expiration of the five years, France should be represented by another government, the English ministry would not be so absurd as to consider itself bound by the conditions of the treaty. But in the same speech in which this incredible declaration is made, the scruples of the Noble Lord, in regard to the influence of the English government in France, revive, as soon

* Debate of 25th May, 1815.

† Debate of 19th February, 1816.

as he is asked to prevent the massacre of the Protestants, and to guarantee to the French people some of the rights which it cannot lose, without lacerating its bosom by civil war, or without biting the dust like slaves. And let it not be pretended that the English people desires to make its enemies bear its yoke! It is proud, it has a right to be so, of twenty-five years and of one day. The battle of Waterloo has filled it with a just pride. Ah! nations that have a country, partake the laurels of victory with the army! citizens should be warriors, warriors are citizens; and of all the joys which God permits to man on earth, the most lively is perhaps that of the triumph of one's country. But this noble emotion, far from stifling generosity, reanimates it; and if the voice of Mr. Fox, so long admired, could be once more heard; if he should ask why English soldiers acted as jailers to France; why the army of a free people treats another people like a prisoner of war who has to pay his ransom to his conquerors: the English nation would learn, that an injustice is committed in its name; and from that instant there would arise from all quarters, in its bosom, advocates of the cause of

France. Could it not be asked, in the midst of the English parliament, what England would now be if the troops of Louis XIV had taken possession of her territory at the time of the restoration of Charles II; if they had seen encamped in Westminster the French army that had triumphed on the Rhine; or, what would have been still more disastrous, the army which subsequently fought against the Protestants of the Cevennes? these armies would have re-established the Catholic worship and suppressed parliaments; for we see, from the dispatches of the French ambassadors, that Louis XIV offered them to Charles II with that intention. What would England then have become? Europe would have heard of nothing but the murder of Charles I, of the excesses of the Puritans in favour of equality, of the despotism of Cromwell, who made himself be felt abroad as at home, since Louis XIV put on mourning for him. Writers would have been found to maintain, that this turbulent and sanguinary people ought to be brought back to its duty, and ought to resume the institutions that were those of their fathers, at the time when their fathers had lost the liberty

of their ancestors. But should we have seen that fine country at the height of power and glory which the universe admires at this day? An unsuccessful attempt to obtain liberty would have received the name of rebellion, crime, in short, every epithet lavished on nations when they are eager for rights, and do not know how to obtain possession of them. The countries which were jealous of the maritime power of England under Cromwell, would have taken delight in her humiliation. The ministers of Louis XIV would have said, that the English were not made to be free, and Europe would not have been able to contemplate the beacon which directed her through the tempest, and will still guide her in the calm.

There are in France, it is said, none but extreme royalists or Bonapartists; and the two parties are equally, it must be confessed, favourers of despotism. The friends of liberty are, it is asserted, in small number, and without strength to compete against these two inveterate factions. The friends of liberty, being virtuous and disinterested, cannot, I admit, contend actively against the eager passions of those whose only

objects are money and place. But the nation is with them; all who are not paid, or do not aim at being paid, are on their side. The progress of the human mind is favourable to them from the very nature of things. They will succeed gradually, but surely, in founding in France a constitution similar to that of England, if England herself, who is the guide of the Continent, forbid her ministers to show themselves every where the enemies of the principles which she so well knows how to maintain at home.

CHAPTER VIII.

Will not the English one day lose their Liberty?

A NUMBER of enlightened persons, who know to what a height the prosperity of the French nation would rise, were the political institutions of England established among them, are persuaded that the English are actuated by a previous jealousy, and throw every obstacle in the way of their rivals obtaining the enjoyment of that liberty of which they know the advantages. But I am far from believing in such a feeling, at least on the part of the nation. It has pride enough to be convinced, and with reason, that it will yet, for a long time, take the lead of all others; and were France to overtake and even surpass her in some respects, England would still preserve exclusive sources of power, peculiar to her situation. As to the ministry, he who directs it, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, seems to have, as I have said, and as he himself

has proved, such a contempt for liberty, that I verily believe he would dispose of it at a cheap rate even to France; and yet the prohibition of export from England has been almost entirely confined to the principles of liberty, while we, on the other hand, would have wished that, in this respect also, the English had been pleased to impart to us the products of their industry.

The English government desires, at whatever sacrifice, to avoid a renewal of war; but it forgets that the most absolute kings of France were perpetually forming hostile projects against England, and that a free constitution is a far better pledge for the stability of peace than the personal gratitude of princes. But what ought above all, in my opinion, to be represented to the English, even to those who are exclusively occupied with the interests of their country, is, that if, for the sake of preventing the French from being factious or free, term it as you will, an English army must be kept up in the territory of France, the liberty of England becomes exposed by this convention, so unworthy of her. A people does not accustom itself to violate national independence among its neighbours, without losing some de-

degrees of energy, some shades in the purity of doctrine, when the point is to profess at home what is disavowed abroad. England partitioning Poland, England occupying Prussia in the style of Bonaparte, would have less strength to resist the encroachments of its own government in the interior. An army on the Continent may involve her in new wars, and the state of her finances should make these wars an object of dread. To these considerations, already warmly agitated in parliament at the time of the discussion of the property tax,* we must add the most important of all, the imminent danger from the military spirit. The English, in doing injury to France, in carrying thither the poisoned arrows of Hercules, may, like Philoctetes, inflict a wound on themselves, They humiliate their rival, they trample her under foot, but let them beware. The contagion threatens them; and, if in compressing their enemies, they should stifle the sacred fire of their own public spirit, the vengeance or the policy to which they abandon themselves would burst, like bad fire-arms, in their hands.

The enemies of the English constitution on the Continent are incessantly repeating that it will

* In the Spring of 1816.

perish by the corruption of parliament, and that ministerial influence will increase to such a point as to annihilate liberty: nothing of the kind is to be dreaded. The English parliament always obeys the opinion of the nation, and that opinion cannot be corrupted, in the sense attached to that expression, that is, be bribed. But that which is seductive for a whole nation is military glory; the pleasure which the youth find in a camp life, the ardent enjoyments procured to them by success in war, are much more conformable to the taste of their age than the lasting benefits of liberty. A man must possess a degree of talent to rise in a civil career; but every vigorous arm can handle a sabre, and the difficulty of distinguishing one's self in the military profession is by no means in proportion to the trouble necessary to acquire information and habits of reflection. The employments, which in the military line are so numerous, give government the means of holding in its dependence a very great number of families. The newly invented decorations offer to vanity recompences which do not flow from the source of all fame, public opinion; in short, to keep up a considerable standing army is to sap the edifice of liberty in its foundation.

In a country where law reigns and where bravery, founded on patriotic feelings, is superior to all praise, in a country where the militia are equally good with the regulars, where, in a moment, the threat of a descent created not only an infantry, but a cavalry equally fine and intrepid, why forge the instrument of despotism? All those political reasonings on the balance of Europe, those old systems which serve as a pretext to new usurpations, were they not known by the proud friends of English liberty when they would not permit the existence of a standing army, at least in such numbers as to make it a support to government? The spirit of subordination and of command together, that spirit necessary in an army, renders men incapable of knowing and respecting what is national in political powers. Already - do we hear some English officers murmuring despotic phrases, although their accent and their language seem to yield with difficulty to the dishonoured words of servitude.

Lord Castlereagh said in the House of Commons that England could not rest contented with blue coats, while all Europe was in arms. It is, however, the blue coats which have rendered the Continent tributary to England. It is because

commerce and finances had liberty for their basis, that is, because the representatives of the nation lent their strength to government, that the lever which has poised the world was enabled to find its supporting point in an island less considerable than any of the countries to which she lent her aid. Make of this country a camp, and soon after a court, and you will see its misery and humiliation. But could the danger, which history points out in every page, not be foreseen, not be repelled by the first thinkers in Europe, whom the nature of the English government calls to take a part in public affairs? Military glory, doubtless, is the only seduction to be dreaded by energetic men; but as there is an energy far superior to that of the profession of arms, the love of liberty, and as this liberty inspires at once the highest degree of valour when our country is exposed, and the greatest disdain for the military spirit when subordinate to a perfidious diplomacy; we ought to hope that the good sense of the English people, and the intelligence of its representatives, will save liberty from the only enemy against which it has to guard—continual war, and that military spirit which war brings in its train.

What a contempt for knowledge, what impatience of the restraints of law, what a desire of power do we not see in all those that have long led the life of camps ! Such men find as much difficulty in submitting to liberty as a people in submitting to arbitrary rule ; and, in a free country, it is necessary that as far as possible every man should be a soldier, but that no one should be so exclusively. English liberty having nothing to dread but a military spirit, parliament, it seems to me, should on that account take into its serious consideration the situation of France ; it ought to do so likewise from that universal feeling of justice, which is to be expected from the most enlightened assembly in Europe. Its own interest commands it, it is necessary to restore the spirit of liberty, naturally weakened by the reaction caused by the French Revolution ; it is necessary to prevent the pretensions of vanity in the continental style which have found their way into certain families. The English nation in all its extent is the aristocracy of the rest of the world by its knowledge and virtues. What would a few puerile disputes on genealogy be beside this intellectual pre-eminence ? Finally, it is

necessary to put an end to that contempt for popular rights, on which the policy of the day is founded. That contempt, artfully spread abroad, might, like religious incredulity, attack the foundation of the most admirable of creeds, in the very country where its temple has been consecrated.

Parliamentary reform, the emancipation of the Catholics, the situation of Ireland, all the different questions which can still be agitated in the English parliament, will be resolved in conformity to the national interest, and do not threaten the state with any danger. Parliamentary reform may be accomplished gradually, by giving annually some additional members to towns that have lately become populous, and by suppressing, with indemnities, the rights of certain boroughs which have now scarcely any voters. But property has such a sway in England, that the partisans of disorder would never be chosen representatives of the people, were a parliamentary reform in all its extent to be accomplished in a single day. Men of talent without fortune might perhaps thus lose the possibility of being returned, as the great proprietors of either party would no longer have seats to give to those

who have not the property necessary to get elected in counties and towns. The emancipation of the Irish Catholics is demanded by the spirit of universal toleration, which ought to govern the world; yet those who oppose it, do not reject this or that worship; but they dread the influence of a foreign sovereign, the Pope, in a country where the rights of citizens should take priority of every thing. It is a question which the interest of the country will decide, because the liberty of the press and of public debate allows no ignorance to prevail in England in what concerns the interior of the country. Not a fault would be committed were foreign affairs equally well understood in that assembly. It is of serious importance to England that the condition of Ireland should be different from what it has hitherto been; a greater share of comfort, and consequently of information, ought to be diffused there. The union with England ought to procure to the Irish people the blessings of the constitution; and so long as the English government insists on the necessity of arbitrary acts for suspending the law, it has by no means accomplished its task, and Ireland cannot be sincerely identi-

fied with a country which does not impart to it all its rights. Finally, the administration of Ireland is a bad example for the English, a bad school for their statesmen; and were England to subsist long between Ireland and France in the present state of things, she would find it difficult to avoid suffering from the perverse influence which her government exercises habitually on the one, and at the present moment on the other.

A people can confer happiness on the man who serves them, only by the satisfaction of his conscience; they cannot inspire attachment to any but the friends of justice, to hearts disposed to sacrifice their interest to their duty. Many and many a heart is there of this nature in England; there are, in these reserved characters, hidden treasures to be discerned only by sympathy, but which show themselves with force, as soon as the occasion calls them forth: it is on these that the maintenance of liberty reposes. All the aberrations of France have not thrown the English into opposite extremes; and although, at this moment, the diplomatic conduct of their government be highly reprehensible, parliament lets no session pass without improving some old law,

framing new ones, discussing questions of jurisprudence, agriculture, or political economy, with an intelligence always on the increase; in short, making a daily advance to improvement: while people in other countries would gladly turn into ridicule that progress, without which society would have no object that could be rationally explained.

But will English liberty escape that operation of time which has devoured every thing on earth. Human foresight is not capable of penetrating into remote futurity; yet we see, in history, republics overturned by conquering empires, or destroying themselves by their own conquests; we see the nations of the North taking possession of countries in the South, because these countries fell into decay, and also because the necessity of civilization carried a part of the inhabitants of Europe with violence towards her southern regions. Every where we have seen nations perish from want of public spirit, from want of knowledge, and, above all, in consequence of the prejudices which, by subjecting the most numerous part of a people to a state of slavery, servitude, or any other injustice, ren-

dered it foreign to the country which it alone could defend. But in the actual state of social order in England, after the duration, for a century, of institutions which have formed the most religious, most moral, and most enlightened nation of which Europe can boast, I should be unable to conceive in what way the prosperity of a country, that is, its liberty, could ever be threatened. At the very moment when the English government leans towards the doctrine of despotism, although it was a despot with whom it contended; at the very moment when legitimacy, violated in a formal manner by the Revolution of 1688, is held up by the English government as the only principal necessary to social order; in this moment of temporary deviation, one already perceives that by degrees the vessel of the state will regain its balance: for of all storms, that which prejudice can excite is the most easily calmed in the country of so many great men, in the centre of so much knowledge.

CHAPTER IX.

Can a limited Monarchy have other Foundations than that of the English Constitution ?

WE find in Swift's Works, a small tract entitled *Polite Conversation*, which comprises all the common-place ideas that enter into the discourse of the fashionable world. A man of parts had a plan of making a similar essay on the political conversations of the present day. "The English constitution is suitable only to Englishmen; the French are not worthy of receiving good laws: people should be on their guard against theory and adhere to practice." What signifies it, say some, that these phrases are tiresome, if they convey a true meaning? But it is their very falsehood that makes them tiresome. Truth, on certain topics, never becomes common, however often repeated; for every man who pronounces it, feels and expresses it in his own way; but the watch-words of party spirit

are the undoubted signs of mediocrity. We may almost take for granted that a conversation beginning by these official sentences promises only a combination of tedium and sophistry. Laying aside then that frivolous language which aims at profundity, it seems to me that thinking men have not even yet discovered other principles of monarchical and constitutional liberty than those which are admitted in England.

Democrats will say that there ought to be a king without a patrician body, or that there ought to be neither; but experience has demonstrated the impracticability of such a system. Of the three powers, aristocrats dispute only that of the people: thus, when they pretend that the English constitution cannot be adapted to France, they merely say that there must be no representatives of the people: for it is certainly not a nobility or hereditary royalty which they dispute. It is thus evident that we cannot deviate from the English constitution without establishing a republic, by retrenching hereditary succession; or a despotism, by suppressing the commons: for, of the three powers, it is impossible to take any one away without producing one or other of these two extremes.

After such a revolution as that of France, constitutional monarchy is the only peace, the only treaty of Westphalia, if we may use the expression, which can be concluded between actual knowledge and hereditary interests; between almost the whole nation and the privileged classes supported by the powers of Europe.

The King of England enjoys a power more than sufficient for a man who wishes to do good; and I can hardly conceive how it is that religion does not inspire princes with scruples on the use of unbounded authority: pride in this case gets the ascendancy over virtue. As to the common-place argument of the impossibility of being free in a continental country, where a numerous standing army must be kept up, the same persons who are incessantly repeating it are ready to quote England for a contrary purpose, and to say that in that country a standing army is not at present dangerous to liberty. The discrepancy in the reasonings of those who renounce every principle goes to an unheard-of length: they avail themselves of circumstances when theory is against them; of theory, when circumstances demonstrate their errors: finally, they wheel round with a suppleness which cannot escape the broad

light of discussion, but which may mislead the mind when it is not permitted either to silence or to answer false reasoners. If a standing army give greater power to the King of France than to the King of England, the ultra-royalists, according to their way of thinking, will enjoy that excess of strength, and the friends of liberty do not dread it, if the representative government and its securities are established in France with sincerity and without exception. The existence of a Chamber of Peers necessarily reduces, it is true, the number of noble families: but will public interest suffer by this change? Would the families known in history complain of seeing associated in the peerage new men, whom the sovereign and public opinion might think worthy of that honour? Ought the *noblesse*, which has most to do to reconcile itself with the nation, be the most obstinately attached to inadmissible pretensions? We, French people, have the advantage of being more ingenious, but at the same time, more stupid than any other people of Europe: I am not aware that we ought to boast of it.

Arguments deserving a more serious examination, because they are not inspired by mere fri-

volous pretensions, were renewed against the Chamber of Peers at the time of Bonaparte's last constitution. Human reason had, it was said, made too great progress in France, to bear with any hereditary distinctions. M. Necker had treated that question fifteen years before, like a writer undaunted either by the vanity of prejudices or the foppery of theories; and it appears to me admitted by every reflecting mind, that the respect with which a preserving element surrounds a government is to the advantage of liberty as well as order, by rendering a recurrence to force less necessary. What obstacle would there then be in France more than in England, to the existence of a numerous, imposing, and enlightened House of Peers? The elements of it exist, and we already see how easy it would be to give them a happy combination.

What, it will be said, for all political sayings are worth the trouble of being combated, on account of the multitude of common minds who respect them; you then wish that France should be nothing but a copy, and a bad copy, of the English government? Truly I do not see why the French or any other nation should reject the

use of the compass because they were Italians who discovered it. There are in the administration of a country, in its finances, in its commerce, in its armies, a number of things connected with localities, and necessarily varying according to them; but the fundamental parts of a constitution are the same throughout. The republican or monarchical form is prescribed by the extent and situation of a country; but there are always three elements given by nature; deliberation, execution, and preservation; and these three elements are necessary to secure to the citizens their liberty, their fortune, the peaceful development of their faculties, and the rewards due to their labour. What people is there to whom such rights are not necessary, and by what other principles than those of England, can we obtain their lasting enjoyment? Can even all the defects, which people are so ready to attribute to the French, serve as a pretext to refuse them such rights? In truth, were the French rebellious children, as their great parents in Europe pretend, I would the rather advise giving them a constitution, which should be in their eyes a pledge of equity in those who govern them; for rebellious children,

when in such numbers, can be more easily corrected by reason than restrained by force.

A lapse of time will be necessary in France before it will be practicable to create a patriotic aristocracy; for the revolution having been directed still more against the privileges of the nobles than against the royal authority, the nobility now second despotism as their safeguard. It might be said with some truth that this state of things is an argument against the creation of a chamber of peers, as too favourable to the power of the crown. But first, it is in the nature of an upper house in general to lean towards the throne; and the opposition of the peers in England is almost always a minority. Besides, there can be introduced into a chamber of peers, a number of noblemen friendly to liberty; and those who may not be so to-day, will become so from the mere circumstance that the discharge of the duties of a high magistracy alienates a person from a court life, and attaches him to the interest of the country. I shall not fear to profess a sentiment which a number of persons will term aristocratic, but with which all the circumstances of the French Revolution have impressed me: it

is, that the noblemen who have adopted the cause of a representative government, and consequently of equality before the law, are, in general, the most virtuous and most enlightened Frenchmen of whom we can yet boast. They combine, like the English, the spirit of chivalry with the spirit of liberty; they have, besides, the generous advantage of founding their opinions on their sacrifices, while the *Tiers Etat* necessarily finds its own in that which it demands for the nation at large. In short, these noblemen have to support, almost daily, the ill-will of their class, sometimes even of their immediate relations. They are told that they are traitors to their order because they are faithful to the country; while men of the opposite extreme, democrats without the restraint of reason or morality, have persecuted them as enemies of liberty, looking to nothing but their privileges, and refusing, very unfairly, to believe in the sincerity of their renunciation. These illustrious citizens, who have voluntarily exposed themselves to so many trials, are the best guardians of liberty on which a country can rely; and a house of peers ought to be created for them, even if the necessity of such an institution in a constitutional

monarchy were not acknowledged even to demonstration.

“No kind of deliberative assembly, whether democratic or hereditary, can succeed in France. The French are too desirous of making a display, and the necessity of producing effect carries them always from one extreme to another.” “It is sufficient then,” say certain men, who constitute themselves the guardians of the nation, that they may declare it in a perpetual minority; “it is sufficient then that France have provincial states instead of a representative assembly.” Certainly I ought to respect provincial assemblies more highly than any one, since my father was the first and the only minister who established them, and who lost his place for having supported them against the parliaments. It is doubtless very wise, in a country of such extent as France, to give the local authorities more power and more importance than in England; but when M. Necker proposed to assimilate, by provincial assemblies, the provinces called elective to the provinces that had states (*pays d'état*); that is, to give to the old provinces the privileges possessed only by those whose union to France had been more recent,

there was at Paris a parliament which could refuse to register money edicts, or any other law emanating directly from the throne. This right of parliament was a very bad outline of a representative government, but however it was one; and now that all the former limits of the throne are overturned, what would be thirty-three provincial assemblies, dependant on ministerial despotism, and possessing no means of opposing it? It is good that local assemblies should discuss the repartition of taxes and verify the public expenses; but popular forms in the provinces, subordinate to an unlimited central power, is a great political deformity.

Let us frankly say that no constitutional government can be established, if, in the outset, we introduce into all places, whether of deputies or of the agents of the executive power, the enemies of the constitution itself. The first condition to enable a representative government to proceed, is that the elections should be free; for they will then produce in men of integrity a wish for the success of the institution, of which they will form a part. A deputy is alleged to have said in company, "People accuse me of not

being for the constitutional charter; they are very wrong. I am always mounted on this charter; but it is indeed to ride it to death." Yet after this charming effusion, this deputy would probably take it very much amiss to be suspected of wanting good faith in politics; but it is too much to desire to unite the pleasure of revealing one's secrets to the advantage of keeping them. Do people think that, with these concealed, or rather with these too well-known intentions, a fair experiment of representative government is made in France? A minister declared lately in the Chamber of Deputies, that, of all powers, the one over which royal authority should exercise the greatest influence, was the power of elections; which is saying in other terms, ~~that~~ the representatives of the people ought to be named by the king. At that rate the officers of the Household ought to be named by the people.

Let the French nation elect the men she shall think worthy of her confidence, let not representatives be imposed on her, and, least of all, representatives chosen among the constant enemies of every representative government: then, and then only, will the political problem be

solved in France. We may, I believe, consider it a certain maxim, that when free institutions have subsisted twenty years in a country, it is on them the blame must be cast, if we do not perceive a daily improvement in the morality, the intelligence, and the happiness of the nation that possesses them. It is for these institutions, when arrived at a certain age, to answer, if we may say so, for men; but at the commencement of a new political establishment, it is for men to answer for the institutions: for we can in no degree estimate the strength of a citadel if the commanding officers open the gates, or attempt to undermine the foundations.

CHAPTER X.

Of the Influence of Arbitrary Power on the Spirit and Character of a Nation.

FREDERIC II, Maria Theresa, and Catharine II, inspired so just an admiration by their talents for governing, that it is very natural, in the countries where their memory still lives and their system is strictly followed, that the public should feel, less than in France, the necessity of a representative government. On the other hand, the Regent and Louis XV gave in the last century a most melancholy example of all the misfortunes, of all the degradations attached to arbitrary power. We repeat then that we have here France only in view : and she must not suffer herself, after twenty-seven years of revolution, to be deprived of the advantages she has reaped, and be made to bear the double dishonour of being conquered at home and abroad.

The partisans of arbitrary power quote the reigns of Augustus in ancient history, of Eliza-

beth and of Louis XIV in modern times, as a proof that absolute monarchy can at least be favourable to the progress of literature. Literature, in the time of Augustus, was little more than a liberal art, foreign to political interests. Under Elizabeth, religious reform stimulated the faculties to development in every way, and the government was the more favourable to it as its strength lay in the very establishment of that reform. The literary progress of France under Louis XIV was caused, as we have already mentioned in the beginning of this work, by the display of intellect called forth by the civil wars. That progress led to the literature of the eighteenth century; and so far is it from being right to attribute to the government of Louis XIV the masterpieces of human intellect that appeared in that age, we must rather consider them almost all as attacks on that government. Despotism then, if it well understands its interest, will not encourage literature, for literature leads men to think, and thought passes sentence on despotism. Bonaparte directed the public mind towards military success; he was perfectly right according to his object: there are but two kinds of auxiliaries for

absolute power, the priesthood and the soldiery. But are there not, it is said, enlightened despotisms, moderate despotisms? None of these epithets, by which people flatter themselves they will produce an illusion in regard to the word to which they are appended, can mislead men of good sense. In a country like France, you must destroy knowledge, if you wish the principles of liberty not to revive. During the reign of Bonaparte and subsequently, a third method has been adopted: it was to make the press instrumental to the oppression of liberty by permitting the use of it only to certain writers, enjoined to comment on every error with the more assurance that it was forbidden to reply to them. This is consecrating the art of writing to the destruction of thought, and publicity itself to darkness; but deception of this kind cannot long continue. When government wishes to command without law, its support must be sought in compulsion, not in arguments; for though it be forbidden to refute them, the palpable falsehood of these arguments suggests a wish to combat them; and to silence men effectually, the best plan is not to speak to them.

It would certainly be unjust not to acknowledge that various sovereigns in possession of arbitrary power have known how to use it with discretion but is it on a chance that the lot of nations should be staked? I shall here quote an expression of the Emperor Alexander, which seems to me worthy of being consecrated. I had the honour of seeing him at Petersburg, at the most remarkable moment of his life, when the French were advancing on Moscow, and when, by refusing the peace which Bonaparte offered, as soon as he thought himself the victor, Alexander triumphed over his enemy more dexterously than his generals did afterwards. "You are not ignorant," said the emperor of Russia to me, "that the Russian peasants are slaves. I do what I can to improve their situation gradually in my dominions; but I meet elsewhere with obstacles which the tranquillity of the empire enjoins me to treat with caution." "Sire," answered I, "I know that Russia is at present happy, although she has no other constitution than the personal character of your Majesty."—"Even if the compliment you pay me were true," replied the Emperor, "*I should be nothing more than a*

fortunate accident." Finer expressions could not, I think, have been pronounced by a monarch whose situation was calculated to blind him in regard to the condition of men. Not only does arbitrary power deliver nations to the chances of hereditary succession; but the most enlightened kings if they are absolute, could not, if they would, encourage in their nation strength and dignity of character. God and the law alone can command man, in the tone of a master, without degrading him.

Do people figure to themselves how ministers, such as Lord Chatham, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, would have been supported by the princes who appointed Cardinal Dubois, or Cardinal Fleury? The great men in French history, the Guises, Coligny, Henry IV, were formed in times of trouble, because those troubles, disastrous indeed, in other respects, prevented the stifling action of despotism, and gave a great importance to certain individuals. But it is in England only that political life is so regularly constituted, that genius and greatness of soul can arise and show themselves without agitating the state.

From Louis XIV to Louis XVI half a century

elapsed : a true model of what is called arbitrary government, when people wish to represent it in its mildest colours. There was not tyranny, because the means to establish it were wanting ; but it was only through the disorder of injustice that any liberty could be secretly acquired. He who wished to become of any account, or to succeed in any business, was obliged to study the intrigue of courts, the most miserable science that ever degraded mankind. There is there no question either of talents or virtues ; for never would a superior man have the kind of patience necessary to please a monarch, educated in the habits of absolute power. Princes thus formed are so persuaded that it is always personal interest which suggests what is told to them, that it must be without their consciousness that one can have influence over them. Now, for this kind of success, to be always on the spot is better than the possession of every possible talent. Princes stand in the same relation to courtiers as we, to our servants : we should be offended if they gave us advice, if they spoke to us in an urgent tone, even on our own interests ; we are displeased to see them put on a discontented look ; but a few

words, addressed to us at an appropriate moment, a few flatteries which would appear to fall accidentally from them, would completely govern us, if our equals, whom we meet on leaving our house, did not teach us what we are. Princes having to do only with servants of penetration, who insinuate themselves more easily into their favour than our attendants into ours, live and die without ever having an idea of the real state of things. But courtiers, though they study the character of their master with a good deal of sagacity, do not acquire any real information even as to the knowledge of the human heart, at least that knowledge that is necessary to direct nations. A king should make it a rule to take as prime minister a man displeasing to him as a courtier; for never can a superior mind bend itself to the exact point necessary to captivate those to whom incense is offered. A certain tact, half common, half refined, serves to make one's way at court: eloquence, reasoning, all the transcendent faculties of the mind and soul, would offend like rebellion, or would be overpowered with ridicule. "What unsuitable discourse: what ambitious projects!" would say

the one, "What does he wish; what does he mean!" would say the other; and the prince would participate in the astonishment of his court. The atmosphere of *etiquette* operates eventually on every body to such a degree, that I know no one sufficiently bold to articulate a significant word in the circle of princes who have remained shut up in their courts. The conversations must be unavoidably confined to the fine weather, to the chase, to what they drank yesterday, to what they will eat to-morrow; in short, to all sorts of things that have neither meaning nor interest for any body. What a school is this for the mind, and for the character! what a sad spectacle is an old courtier, who has passed many years in the habits of stifling all his feelings, dissembling his opinions, waiting the breath of a prince that he may respire, and his signal that he may move! Such men, at last, destroy the finest of all sentiments, respect for old age, when they are seen, bent by the habit of bowing, wrinkled by false smiles, pale more from *ennui* than from years, and standing for hours together on their trembling legs in those antichambers, where to sit down at the age of eighty would seem almost an act of revolt.

One prefers, in this career, the young men, giddy and foppish, who can boldly display flattery towards their masters, with arrogance towards their inferiors, and who despise the part of mankind which is above as well as that which is below them. They proceed thus, trusting only to their own merit until some loss of favour awaken them from the fascination of folly and cleverness combined; for a mixture of the two is necessary to succeed in the intrigues of courts. Now in France, from rank to rank, there have always been courts, that is houses, in which was distributed a certain quantity of favour for the use of those who aimed at money and place. The flatterers of power, from the clerks to the chamberlains, have adopted that flexibility of language, that facility of saying every thing, or concealing every thing, that cutting tone in the style of decision, that condescension for the fashion of the day as for a great authority, which has given rise to the levity of which the French are accused; and yet this levity is found only in the swarm of men who buzz around power. This levity they must have to change their party readily; they must have it to prevent their entering thoroughly into any study, for otherwise it would cost them too much to say the contrary

of what they would have seriously learned; general ignorance facilitates confident affirmation. In short, they must have this levity to lavish, from democracy down to legitimacy, from the republic down to military despotism, all the phrases most opposite in point of meaning, but which still bear a resemblance to each other, like persons of the same family, equally superficial, disdainful, and calculated never to present but one side of a question in opposition to that which circumstances have exploded. The artifices of intrigue being introduced at present into literature as into every thing else, the unlucky Frenchman who reads will learn things, not as they really are, but as it is expedient to describe them. In the eighteenth century, on the contrary, men in power had no apprehension of the influence of writings on public opinion, and they left literature almost as undisturbed as the physical sciences are at this day. The great writers have all combated, with more or less reserve, the different institutions founded on prejudices. But what was the result of this conflict? That the institutions were vanquished. One might apply to the reign of Louis XV, and to the kind of happiness found under it, the saying

of the man who was falling from the third story of a house: "This is very pleasant, if it would but last."

Representative governments, it will still be objected to me, have not existed in Germany, and yet learning has made immense progress there. No two countries have less resemblance than Germany and France. There is a methodical spirit in the German governments, which much diminishes the irregular ascendancy of courts. No *coteries*, no mistresses, no favourites, nor even ministers who can change the order of things, are to be found there. Literature proceeds without flattering any one; the rectitude of character, and the abstract nature of studies, are such, that even in the time of civil troubles, it would be impossible to compel a German writer to play those strange tricks, (*ces tours de passe-passe*) which have justly led to the remark, that in France paper suffers every thing, so much is required of it. You admit then, I shall be told, that the French character has invincible defects which are hostile to the knowledge, as well as to the virtues, without which liberty cannot exist? By no means; I say that an arbitrary,

fluctuating, capricious, and unstable government, full of prejudice and superstition in some respects, and of frivolity and immorality in others, that this government, such as it existed heretofore in France, had left knowledge, intellect, and energy only to its adversaries. And, if it be impossible that such an order of things should be in accordance with the progress of knowledge, it is still more certain that it is irreconcilable with purity of morals, and dignity of character. We already perceive that, notwithstanding the misfortunes of France, marriage is far more respected since the Revolution, than it was under the old system. Now, marriage is the support of morals and of liberty. How should women have confined themselves to domestic life under an arbitrary government, and not have employed all their seductive means to influence power? They were actuated certainly not by an enthusiasm for general ideas, but by the desire of obtaining places for their friends; and nothing was more natural in a country where men in favour could do every thing, where they disposed of the revenues of the state, where they were restrained by nothing but the will of the King, necessarily modified by the intrigues of

those who surrounded him. How should any scruple have been felt to employ the credit of women who were in favour, to obtain from a minister any exception whatever to a rule that did not exist? Can it be believed that Madame de Montespan under Louis XIV, or Madame Dubarry under Louis XV, ever received a refusal from ministers? And, without approaching so near the throne, where was the circle on which favour did not act as at court, and where a person did not employ means of every kind to improve his situation? In a nation, on the contrary, regulated by law, what woman would have the useless effrontery to solicit what was unfair, or rely more on her entreaties than on the real claims of those whom she recommended? Corruption of morals is not the only result of those continual solicitations, of that activity of intrigue, of which French women, particularly those of the first class, have but too frequently set the example; the passions of which they are susceptible, and which the delicacy of their organs renders more lively, disfigure in them all that is amiable in their sex.

It is in free countries only that the true character of a woman and the true character of a

man can be known and admired. Domestic life inspires all the virtues in women; and the political career, far from habituating men to despise morality, as an old tale of the nursery, stimulates those who hold public functions to the sacrifice of their personal interests, to the dignity of honour, and to all that greatness of soul which the habitual presence of public opinion never fails to call forth. Finally, in a country where women are at the bottom of every intrigue, because favour governs every thing, the morals of the first class have nothing in common with those of the nation, and no sympathy can exist between the persons who fill the drawing-rooms and the bulk of the people. A woman of the lowest order in England feels that she has some kind of analogy with the Queen, who like her has taken care of her husband, and brought up her children in the way that religion and morality enjoin to every wife and mother. But the morals to which arbitrary government leads transform women into a sort of third factitious sex, the sad production of a depraved social order. Women, however, may be excusable for taking political matters as they are, and for finding pleasure in those lively interests

from which they seem debarred by their natural destiny.' But what are men who are brought up under arbitrary government? We have seen such men amidst the Jacobins, under Bonaparte, and in foreign camps—every where except in the incorruptible band of the friends of liberty. They take their stand on the excesses of the Revolution to proclaim despotism; and twenty-five years are opposed to the history of the world, which displays nothing but the horrors committed by superstition and tyranny. To believe in the good faith of these partisans of arbitrary power, we must suppose that they have never read what preceded the era of the French Revolution; and we know some who may well found their justification on their ignorance.

Our Revolution, as we have already stated, followed the different phases of England, almost with the regularity presented by the crisis of two similar maladies. But the question which now agitates the civilized world consists in the application of all the fundamental truths upon which social order rests. The activity of power has led men to commit all the crimes which sully history; fanaticism has seconded tyranny;

hypocrisy, violence, fraud, and the sword have enchained, deceived, and devastated the human race. Two periods alone have illumined the globe: the history of some ages of Greece and Rome. Slavery, by limiting the number of citizens, allowed the republican government to be established even in extensive countries, and thence resulted the greatest virtues. Christianity, by liberating slaves, and by civilizing the rest of Europe, has since conferred on individual existence a good which is the source of all others. But despotism, that disorder within order, has all along maintained itself in several countries; and all the pages of our history have been stained, either by religious massacres, or judiciary murders. On a sudden, Providence permitted England to solve the problem of constitutional monarchies; and America, a century later, that of federal republics. Since these periods, not one drop of blood has been shed unjustly by tribunals in either of these countries. For sixty years past religious quarrels have ceased in England, and they never existed in America. The venom of power, which has corrupted so many men during so many ages, has undergone at last, by

representative governments, a salutary inoculation, which has destroyed all its malignity. Since the battle of Culloden, in 1746, which may be considered the close of the civil troubles that commenced a hundred years before, not one abuse of power can be cited in England. There exists not one citizen of worth who has not said, "*Our happy constitution*;" because there exists no one who has not felt its protection. This chimera, for such whatever is sublime has always been called, stands there realized before our eyes. What feeling, what prejudice, what hardness of head or heart can prompt us, in recalling what we have read in our history, not to prefer the sixty years of which England has given us an example? Our kings, like those of England, have been alternately good and bad; but their reign presents at no time sixty years of internal peace and liberty together. Nothing equal to it has even been thought possible at any other era. Power is the protector of order; but it is also its enemy by the passions which it excites: regulate its exercise by public liberty, and you will have banished that contempt for mankind which exempts all vices from restraint, and justifies the art of profiting by them.

· CHAPTER XI.

Of the Mixture of Religion with Politics.

IT is very often said that France has become irreligious since the Revolution. No doubt at the period of all crimes, the men who committed them must have thrown off the most sacred of restraints. But the general disposition of men at present is not connected with melancholy causes, which happily are very remote from us. Religion, in France, as it was preached by priests, has always mixed itself with politics; and from the time when the Popes absolved subjects from their oath of fidelity to their kings, until the last catechism sanctioned by the great majority of the French clergy, a catechism in which, as we have seen, those who did not love and serve the Emperor Napoleon were threatened with eternal damnation; there is not a period in which the ministers of religion have not employed it to establish political dogmas, all

differing according to circumstances. In the midst of these changes, the only invariable thing has been intolerance towards whatever was not conformable to the prevailing doctrine. Never has religion been presented merely as the most inward worship of the heart, without any connexion with the interests of this world.

We are exposed to the reproach of irreligion when we do not accord in opinion with the ecclesiastical authorities in the affairs of government; but a man may be irritated against those who seek to impose upon him their manner of thinking in politics, and, nevertheless, be a very good Christian. It does not follow that because France desires liberty and equality in the eye of the law, that the country is not Christian;—quite the contrary. Christianity accords eminently with this opinion. Thus, when man shall cease to join what God has separated, religion and politics, the clergy will have less power, and less influence, but the nation will be sincerely religious. All the art of the privileged persons of both classes consists in establishing, that he who wishes for a constitution is disaffected; and he who dreads the influence of the priests in the

affairs of this world, an unbeliever. These tactics are well known, for, like all the rest, they have only been revived.

Sermons in France, as in England, in times of party, have often treated of political questions, and, I believe, they have but little edified persons of a contrary opinion, by whom they were heard. We do not much attend to a sermon which we hear in the morning, from a preacher with whom we have been disputing the day before; and religion suffers from the hatred with which political questions imbue ecclesiastics who interfere in those discussions.

It would be unjust to pretend that France is irreligious because the nation does not apply, according to the wish of some members of the clergy, the famous text, that all power comes from God; a text, the honest interpretation of which is easy, but which has been wonderfully useful in treaties made by the clergy with all governments supporting themselves on the divine right of force. I will cite on this occasion some passages of the Pastoral Instruction of the Bishop of Troyes, who, when he was almoner to Bonaparte, delivered a discourse at the christening of

the King of Rome, at least as edifying as that with which we are going to be engaged. It is unnecessary to add that this Instruction is of 1816. The date of a publication in France can always be recognized by the opinion which it contains.

The Bishop of Troyes says, " France wishes for her King, but her legitimate King, because legitimacy is the first treasure of a nation, and a benefit so much the more invaluable, as it compensates for all others, and can by no other be supplied." Let us pause one moment to pity the man, who thinks thus, for having served Napoleon so long and so well. What an effort! what constraint! But, after all, the Bishop of Troyes does no more in this respect than many others who still hold places; and we must render him at least the justice that he does not call for the proscription of his fellow-flatterers of Napoleon: and that is no small matter.

I will pass over the flattering language of the pastoral letter; a language which a man ought to permit himself the less to use towards power, the more he respects power. Let us proceed to things of less benignity: " France wishes for her

King; but, in wishing for him, she does not pretend that she can choose another; and, happily, she has not this fatal right. Far from us be the thought that kings hold their authority from the people, and that the option which the people may have had of choosing them includes the right of recalling them. - - - - No, it is not true that the people is sovereign, nor that kings are its trustees; - - - - this is the cry of sedition, the dream of independence; it is the foul chimera of turbulent democracy; it is the most cruel falsehood that our vile tyrants ever invented to deceive the multitude. We do not mean to refute seriously this disastrous sovereignty; - - - - but it is our duty, in the name of religion, to protest against this anarchical and anti-social doctrine, vomited amongst us with the revolutionary lava; and to guard the faithful committed to our care, against this double heresy, political and religious, equally reprobated by the greatest doctors and the greatest legislators, not less contrary to natural than to divine right, nor less destructive of the authority of kings than of the authority of God." The Bishop of Troyes, in fact, does not seriously treat that question, which had, however, ap-

peared worthy of the attention of some thinkers ; but it is easier to convert a principle into heresy than to investigate it by discussion. There are, however, some Christians in England, in America, and in Holland ; and, since social order has been founded, well-informed persons have been known to believe, that all power emanated from the people, without whom no power could exist. It is in this manner that by employing religion to direct politics, the French are liable to continual reproaches of impiety ; which simply means, that there are in France a great many friends of liberty, who are of opinion that a compact should exist between nations and sovereigns. It seems to me that we can believe in God, and yet think in this manner.

By a singular contradiction this Bishop, so orthodox in politics, cites the famous passage which served him, no doubt, as a justification in his own eyes, when he was the almoner of the Usurper : *“All power comes from God ; and he who resists power, resists God himself.”* “Behold, beloved brethren, the public right of religion, without which no one has the right to command, nor the obligation to obey. Behold,

that first sovereignty from which all others are derived, and without which all others would have neither basis nor sanction ; it is the only constitution adapted to all places, as well as to all times ; the only one which can enable us to do without others, and without which no other can maintain itself. This is the only one which can never be subject to revision ; the only one which cannot be shaken by any faction, and against which no rebellion can prevail ; against which, in short, nations and kings, masters, and subjects, can do nothing : all power comes from God ; and he who resists power, resists God himself." Is it possible in a few words to collect a greater number of fatal errors and servile reasonings. Thus Nero and Robespierre, Louis XI and Charles IX, the most sanguinary of men, ought to be obeyed, if he who resists power resists God himself ! Nations, or their representatives, are the only power which should have been excepted, in this implicit respect for authority. When two parties in the state are contending together, how shall we seize the moment when one of them becomes sacred, that is to say, the stronger ? Those French then were wrong who did not quit the King during

twenty-five years of exile ! For certainly during that time it was Bonaparte to whom we could not refuse the right which the Bishop of Troyes proclaims that of power. Into what absurdities writers fall, who wish to reduce into theories, into dogmas, into maxims, the interests of the moment ! The sword, in truth, is less degrading than speech, when it is thus used. It has been a hundred times repeated that the phrase in the Gospel “ All power comes from God,” and the other, “ Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s,” had solely for their object to remove all political discussion. Jesus Christ desired that the religion he preached should be considered by the Romans as entirely unconnected with public affairs ; “ My reign is not of this world,” said he. All that is required of the ministers of religion, is to fulfil in this respect, as in all others, the intentions of Christ.

“ Appoint, O Lord ! ” says the Prophet, “ a legislator over them, that the nations may know that they are men.” It would not be amiss that kings should also learn that they are men, and certainly they must be ignorant of it, unless they contract engagements towards the nation whom

they govern. When the Prophet prays to God to establish a king, it is, as all religious men pray to God, to preside over every event of this life; but how is a dynasty specially established by Providence? Is it prescription that is the sign of a Divine mission? The popes have excommunicated and deposed princes from the remotest times. They excluded Henry IV on account of his religion; and powerful motives recently impelled a pope to concur in the coronation of Bonaparte. It will then belong to the clergy to declare, when necessary, that such a dynasty, and not such another, is chosen by the will of God. But let us follow the pastoral instruction, "Appoint a legislator," that is to say, "a king who is the legislator above all, and without whom there can be no law; a supreme legislator who will speak and make laws in your name; one legislator, and not several; for the more there are, the worse will the laws be made; a legislator with unrivalled authority, that he may do good without hindrance; a legislator, who, obedient himself to his own laws, cannot bind any one to submit to his passions and caprices; finally a legislator, who, making only just laws, would thus

lead his people to real liberty." A man who will make laws for himself alone, will *have neither passions nor caprices* ; a man surrounded by all the snares of royalty, will be the only legislator of a people, and *will make none but just laws* ! There is, forsooth, no example of the contrary ; we have never seen kings abuse their power ; no priests such as the Cardinals of Lorraine, Richelieu, Mazarine, Dubois, who excited them to it ! and how is that doctrine compatible with the constitutional charter which the King himself has sworn ? This King whom France desires ; for the Bishop of Troyes allows himself to say this, although, according to him, France has no right to form a wish on the subject ; this King, who is established by the Lord, has promised on oath that there should be various legislators, and not one only, although the Bishop of Troyes pretends that *the more there are, the more imperfect will be the laws*. Thus the information acquired by administration ; thus the wishes collected in the provinces by those who live there ; thus the sympathy arising from the same wants and the same sufferings, all this is not equivalent to the information of a single king who *represents him-*

self, to make use of a somewhat singular expression of the Bishop of Troyes. One would think that one had already attained what, in this kind of composition, cannot be surpassed, if the following passage did not claim a preference.

“ Thus, beloved brethren, have we seen this senate of kings under the name of Congress, consecrate the legitimacy of all dynasties as a principle, as the ægis of their throne and the surest pledge of the happiness of nations and of the tranquillity of states. We are kings, said they, because we are kings: for so require the order and stability of the social world: so requires our own security; and they have said it without much concerning themselves, whether they were not thus in opposition to the ideas called liberal, and still less whether the partition which they made of the countries which they found to suit them, were not the most solemn denial given to the sovereignty of the people.” Would not one think that we had quoted the most ironical satire against the Congress of Vienna, did we not know that such could not have been the intention of the author? But when a writer goes to such a degree of absurdity, he is not aware of the ridicule incurred, for

methodical folly is very serious. *We are kings because we are kings*, the sovereigns of Europe are made to say; "*I am, that I am*," are the words of Jehovah in the Bible; and the ecclesiastical writer takes on himself to attribute to monarchs that which becomes the Deity alone. *The sovereigns*, said he, *did not much concern themselves whether the partitioning of the countries which they found to suit them was in harmony with the ideas called liberal*. So much the worse, in truth, if they have managed this partitioning like a banker's account, paying balances in a certain number of souls, or of fractions of souls, to make up a round sum of subjects! So much the worse, if they have consulted nothing but their convenience, without thinking of the interests and wishes of the people! But the sovereigns, be assured, reject the unworthy eulogy that is thus addressed to them; they, doubtless, reject also the blame which the Bishop of Troyes ventures to cast on them, although that blame contains an odious flattery under the form of a reproach.

"It is true that several of them have been seen to favour, at the hazard of being in contradiction with themselves, those popular forms and other

new theories which their ancestors did not know, and to which, until our days, their own countries had been strangers, without suffering from their ignorance: but this, we say without hesitation, is the malady of Europe, and the most alarming symptom of its decline: it is in that way that Providence seems to attack it to accelerate its dissolution. Let us add to this *mania* of recasting governments, and supporting them by books, that tendency of innovating minds to make a blending of all modes of worship as they wish to make of all parties, and to believe that the authority of princes acquires for itself all the strength and authority of which they strip religion; and we shall have the two greatest political dissolvents which can undermine empires, and with which Europe, sooner or later, must fall into shreds and rottenness." Such then is the object of all these homilies in favour of absolute power; it is religious toleration that must make Europe fall, sooner or later, into shreds and rottenness. Public opinion is favourable to this toleration; it is then necessary to proscribe whatever can serve as an organ to public opinion: then the clergy of the only admitted religion will

be rich and powerful ; for, on the one hand, they will call themselves the interpreters of that divine right by which kings reign, and, on the other, the people being allowed to profess nothing but the prevailing religion, the clerical body alone must be intrusted with public education, as well as with the direction of conscience, which supports itself on the Inquisition, as arbitrary power on the police.

A fraternity of all Christian communities, such as the Holy Alliance proposed by the Emperor Alexander has made humanity expect, is condemned by this bishop in the censure passed on the *blending of the forms of worship*. What social order is proposed to us by these partisans of despotism and of intolerance, these enemies of knowledge, these adversaries of humanity, when it bears the name of people and nation ! whither could one fly, were they to have command ? A few words more on this pastoral instruction of which the title is so mild and the words so bitter.

“ Alas ! ” says the Archbishop of Troyes, addressing himself to the king, “ seditious men, the better to enslave us, already begin to speak to us of our rights, that they may make us forget

yours. Sire, we have doubtless rights, and they are as ancient as the monarchy : the right of belonging to you as the head of the great family, and of calling ourselves your subjects, because that word signifies your children." One cannot avoid thinking that the writer, a man of intelligence, himself smiled when he proposed, as the only right of the French people, that of calling themselves the subjects of a monarch who should dispose, according to his good pleasure, of their property and their lives. The slaves of Algiers can boast of rights of the same kind.

Lastly, see on what rests the whole superstructure of sophistry prescribed as an article of faith, because reasoning could not support it. What a use of the name of God ! and how can one expect that a nation, to whom one says this is religion, should not become unbelievers, for the misfortune of itself and the world !

" Beloved brethren, we shall not cease to repeat to you what Moses said to his people : *Ask your forefathers and the God of your fathers, and go back to the source.* Consider that the less we deviate from beaten paths the greater is our security. Consider, in short, that to despise

the authority of ages is to despise the authority of God, since it is God himself who makes antiquity ; and that to desire to renounce it, is, in any event, the greatest of crimes, even were it not the greatest of misfortunes." *It is God that makes antiquity.* Doubtless ; but God is likewise the author of the present, on which the future is about to depend. How silly would this assertion be, did it not contain a dextrous artifice ! It is as follows : all upright people are affected when reminded of their ancestors ; the idea of their fathers seems always to join itself to the idea of the past. But should this noble and pure feeling lead to the re-establishment of torture, of the wheel, of the Inquisition, because in remote ages abominations of that kind were the work of barbarous manners ? Can we support what is absurd and criminal, because absurdity and criminality once existed ? Were not our fathers culpable towards their fathers when they adopted Christianity and abolished slavery ? *Reflect that the less we deviate from the beaten paths the greater is our security,* says the Bishop of Troyes ; but to enable this path to have become beaten, it must have been necessary to

pass from antiquity to later times; and we now wish to profit by the information of our days, that posterity also may have an antiquity proceeding from us, but which posterity may change, in her turn, if Providence continue to protect, as it has done, the progress of the human mind in all directions.

I should not have dwelt so long on this composition of the Bishop of Troyes did it not contain the quintessence of much of what is daily published in France. Will good sense escape from it unimpaired? and what is still more serious, will the sentiment of religion, without which men have no refuge in themselves, be able to resist this mixture of policy and religion, which bears an evident character of hypocrisy and egotism?

CHAPTER XII.

Of the Love of Liberty.

THE necessity of free governments, that is, of limited monarchies in great states, and independent republics in those which are small, is so evident, that we are tempted to believe no one can refuse sincerely to admit so obvious a truth ; and yet, when we meet with men who combat it in earnest, we would wish, for our own satisfaction, to frame some explanation of their motives. Liberty has three classes of opponents in France ; —the nobles, who consider honour as consisting in passive obedience, the nobles, who possess more reflection with less candour, and believe that the interests of their own aristocracy are identified with the interests of absolute power ; —the men whom the French Revolution has disgusted with the ideas which it profaned ; — finally, the Bonapartists, the Jacobins, all, in short, who think that conscience has no concern with politics. The nobles who connect honour

with passive obedience confound altogether the spirit of ancient chivalry with that of the courtiers of modern days. The ancient knights were, doubtless, ready to die for their king, and so would every warrior for his leader ; but, as we have already said, they were by no means the partisans of absolute power : they sought to encompass that power with barriers, and placed their glory in defending a liberty, which, though aristocratic, was still liberty. As to the nobles who are convinced that the privileges of the aristocracy must now rest upon the despotism which they once sought to imitate, we may say to them, as in the romance of *Waverley* : “ What concerns you is not so much whether James Stuart shall be king, as whether Fergus Mac Ivor shall be Earl.” The institution of a peerage accessible to merit, is to nobility what the English constitution is to monarchy. It is the only mode of preserving either the one or the other : for we live in an age in which the world does not readily imagine that a minority, and a very small minority, can have a right which is not for the advantage of the majority. A few years ago, the Sultan of Persia had an account given to him of the English con-

stitution, by the ambassador of England at his court. After having listened to it, and, as we shall see, understood it tolerably well: "I can conceive," said he, "that the order of things which you describe to me is better framed than the government of Persia for the duration and happiness of your empire; but it seems to me much less conducive to the enjoyment of the monarch." This was an accurate statement of the question; only that it is better even for the monarch to be guided in the administration of affairs by public opinion, than incessantly to run the risk of being in opposition to it. Justice is the ægis of all and of every one: but in its quality of justice, it is the great number which has the preferable claim to protection.

We have next to speak of those whom the misfortunes and the crimes of the French Revolution have terrified, and who fly from one extreme to the other, as if the arbitrary power of an individual were the only sure preservative against that of mobs. It was thus that they erected the tyranny of Bonaparte, and it is thus that they would render Louis XVIII a despot, if his superior wisdom did not protect him from

it. Tyranny is an upstart, and despotism a grandee; but both are equally offensive to human reason. After having witnessed the servility with which Bonaparte was obeyed, we can with difficulty conceive that the republican spirit is that which is to be dreaded in France. The diffusion of knowledge and the nature of things will bring liberty to France; but the nation assuredly will not spontaneously show itself either factious or turbulent.

Since for so many ages every generous soul has loved liberty; since the noblest actions have been inspired by her; since antiquity and the history of modern times exhibit to us so many prodigies effected by public spirit; since we have seen so lately what nations can do; since every reflecting writer has been loud in proclaiming the praises of freedom; since not one political work of lasting reputation can be cited which is not animated by this sentiment; since the fine arts, poetry, the master-pieces of the theatre, which are intended to excite emotion in the human heart, all extol public liberty; what are we to say of those little men, great only in folly, who, with an accent insipid and affected as their manner in every other respect,

declare to you, that it is a proof of very bad taste to trouble yourself with politics ; that after the horrors which we have witnessed nobody cares for liberty ; that popular elections are an institution altogether vulgar ; that the people always make a bad choice ; and that in France it does not become genteel persons to go, as in England, and mingle with the populace. *Bad taste to trouble ourselves with politics.* Good heavens ! Of what then are those young people to think, who were educated under the government of Bonaparte, merely for the field, without any information, without any interest in literature or the fine arts. Since they can have neither a new idea, nor a sound judgment, on such subjects, they would, at least, be men, if they were to occupy themselves with their country, if they were to deem themselves citizens, if their life were to be in any way useful. But what would they substitute for the politics which they affect to proscribe ? Some hours passed in the antichamber of ministers, to obtain places which they are not qualified to fill ; some trivial drawing-room conversations, beneath the understanding of even the silliest of the women to whom they address them. When they were

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encountering death they might escape without blame, because in courage there is always greatness : but in a country which, thanks to Heaven ! will be at peace, to have no attainments beyond the level of a chamberlain, and to be unable to impart other knowledge or dignity to their native land ;—that is bad taste indeed. The time is gone by when young Frenchmen could set the fashion in every thing. They have still, it is true, the frivolity of former days : but they have no longer the graces on account of which that frivolity might be pardoned.

After the horrors which we have witnessed, nobody, it is said, now wishes to hear the name of liberty. If characters of sensibility give themselves up to an involuntary and distempered hatred (for so must it be named, since it depends on certain recollections, certain associations of terror, which it is impossible to vanquish), we would say to them with a poet of the present day, that liberty must not be compelled to poniard herself like Lucretia, because she has been violated. We would bid them remember that the massacre of St. Bartholomew has not caused

the proscription of the Catholic faith. We would tell them, in short, that the fate of truth is not dependent on the men who put this or that motto on their banners, and that good sense has been given to every individual to judge of things as they are in themselves, and not according to accidental circumstances. The criminal in all times have tried to avail themselves of a generous pretext in order to excuse bad actions : there are few crimes in the world, which their authors have not ascribed to honour, to religion, or to liberty. It hardly follows, I think, that we must on that account proscribe all that is admirable on earth. In politics especially, as there is room for fanaticism as well as for bad faith, for devotedness as well as for personal interest, we are subject to fatal errors when we have not a certain force of understanding and of soul. If on the day after the death of Charles I, an Englishman, cursing with reason that enormity, had implored Heaven that there might never again be freedom in England, we might certainly have felt an interest in that emotion of a good heart, which in its agitation confounded all the pretexts of a great crime with the crime

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itself; and would have proscribed, had it been able, even the sun, which had risen on that day as well as on others. But if so unthinking a prayer had been heard, England would not at this day serve as an example to the world; the universal dominion of Bonaparte would be weighing Europe to the ground; for, without the aid of England, Europe would not have been in a situation to work out her deliverance. Such arguments and many others might be addressed to persons, whose very prejudices merit respect, because they spring from the affections of the heart. But what are we to say of those who treat the friends of liberty as Jacobins, while they themselves have been ready instruments in the hands of the Imperial power. We were compelled, they say, to be so. Ah! I know some who could likewise speak of constraint, and who yet escaped it. But since you have allowed yourselves to be compelled, at least allow us to endeavour to give you a free constitution, in which the empire of the law will prevent any thing wrong from being required of you: for you are, it appears to me, in danger of giving way too readily to circumstances. They, whom nature

has endued with a disposition to resist, have less reason to dread despotism : but you, whom it so completely bent, should earnestly wish that at no time, under no prince, in no shape, may it ever again overtake you.

The Epicureans of our days would wish that knowledge might improve our physical enjoyments without exciting a developement of intellect: they would have the great body of the community labour to render social life more agreeable and comfortable, without desiring to share in the advantages which it has gained for all. In former days the general style of life had little delicacy or refinement, and the relations of society were likewise much more simple and stable. But now that commerce has multiplied every thing, if you do not give motives of emulation to talent, the love of money will fill the vacancy. You will not raise up the castles of feudal chieftains from their ruins ; you will not recall to life the princesses, who with their own hands spun the vests of warriors ; you will not even restore the reign of Louis XIV. The present times admit not of that sort of gravity and respect, which then gave so much ascendancy to that court. But

you will have corruption, and corruption without refinement of mind ; the lowest degradation to which the human species can fall. It is not then between knowledge and the ancient system of feudal manners that we are to choose, but between the desire of distinction and the thirst of wealth.

Examine the adversaries of freedom in every country, you will find among them a few deserters from the camp of men of talent, but in general you will see that the enemies of freedom are the enemies of knowledge and intelligence. They are proud of their deficiency in this respect; and it must be allowed that such a negative triumph is easily gained.

A plan has been devised for exhibiting the friends of liberty as enemies of religion : there are two pretexts for the singular injustice which would exclude the noblest sentiment on this earth from alliance with Heaven. The first is the Revolution ; as it was effected in the name of philosophy, an inference has thence been drawn, that to love liberty it is necessary to be an atheist. Assuredly, it was because the French did not unite religion to liberty, that their revo-

lution deviated so soon from its primitive direction. There might be certain dogmas of the Catholic church which did not agree well with the principles of freedom; passive obedience to the Pope was as difficult to be defended as passive obedience to the King. But Christianity has in truth brought liberty upon earth; justice towards the oppressed, respect for the unfortunate; equality before God, of which equality in the eye of the law is only an imperfect image. It is by a confusion wilful in some, blind in others, that endeavours have been made to represent the privileges of the nobility and the absolute power of the throne as doctrines of religion. The forms of social organization can have no concern with religion, except by their influence on the maintenance of public justice and individual morals. The rest belongs to the science of this world.

It is time that five-and-twenty years, of which fifteen belong to military despotism, should no longer place themselves as a phantom betwixt history and us, and should no longer deprive us of all the lessons and of all the examples which it exhibits. Is Aristides to be forgotten, and

Phocion, and Epaminondas, in Greece ; Regulus, Cato, and Brutus, at Rome ; Tell in Switzerland ; Egmont and Nassau in Holland ; Sidney and Russel in England ; because a country that had long been governed by arbitrary power was delivered, during a revolution, to men whom arbitrary power had corrupted ? What is there so extraordinary in such an event, as to change the course of the stars, that is, to give a retrograde motion to truth, which was before advancing with history to enlighten the human race ? By what public sentiment shall we be moved henceforth, if we are to reject the love of liberty ? The prejudices of other days have now no influence upon men except from calculation ; they are defended only by those who have a personal interest in defending them. What man in France desires absolute power from a disinterested feeling, or for its own sake. Inform yourself of the personal situation of its partisans, and you will soon know the motives of their doctrine. On what then would the fraternal tie of human associations be founded, if no enthusiasm were to be developed in the heart ? Who could be elated with being a Frenchman, after having seen liberty destroyed by tyranny,

and tyranny broken to pieces by foreign force, unless the laurels of war were at least rendered honourable by the conquest of liberty? We should have to contemplate a mere struggle between the selfishness of those who were privileged by birth, and the selfishness of those who are privileged by events. But where would then be France? Who could take a pride in having served her, since nothing would remain in the heart, either of past times or of the new reform?

Liberty! Let us repeat her name with so much the more energy, that the men who ought to pronounce it, at least as an apology, keep it at a distance through flattery: let us repeat it without fear of wounding any power that deserves respect; for all that we love, all that we honour, is included in it. Nothing but liberty can arouse the soul to the interests of social order. Assemblages of men would be nothing but associations for commerce or agriculture, if the life of patriotism did not excite individuals to sacrifice themselves for their fellows. Chivalry was a warlike brotherhood, which satisfied that thirst for self-devotion which is felt by every generous heart. The nobles were companions in arms, bound

together by duty and honour; but since the progress of the human mind has created nations,—in other words, since all men participate in some degree in the same advantages, what would become of the human species were it not for the sentiment of liberty? Why should the patriotism of a Frenchman begin at this frontier, and cease at that, if there were not within this compass hopes, enjoyments, an emulation, a security, which make him love his native land as much through the genuine feelings of the soul as through habit? Why should the name of France awaken so invincible an emotion, if there were no other ties among the inhabitants of this fine country, than the privileges of some and the subjection of the rest?

Wherever you meet with respect for human nature, affection for fellow-creatures, and that energy of independence which can resist every thing upon earth, and prostrate itself only before God; there you behold man the image of his Creator, there you feel at the bottom of the soul an emotion which so penetrates its very substance, that it cannot deceive you with respect to truth. And you, nobles of France, for whom honour

was freedom, you who by a long series of exploits and greatness were entitled to consider yourselves as a chosen portion of the human race, permit the nation to raise itself to a level with you : she too has rights of conquest ; every Frenchman may now call himself a gentleman, if every gentleman is not willing to be called a citizen.

It is indeed a remarkable circumstance, that throughout the world, wherever a certain depth of thought exists, there is not to be found an enemy of freedom. As the celebrated Humboldt has traced upon the mountains of the New World the different degrees of height which permit the development of this or that plant, so might we predict what extent, what elevation of intellect is requisite to enable a man to conceive the great interests of his species in their full connexion, and in all their truth. The evidence of these conclusions is such, that they who have once admitted them, can never renounce them, and that from one end of the world to the other, the friends of freedom maintain communication by knowledge, as religious men by sentiments : or rather knowledge and sentiment unite in the love of freedom as in that of the Supreme Being. Is the

question the abolition of the slave trade, or the liberty of the press, or religious toleration? Jefferson thinks as La Fayette; La Fayette, as Wilberforce; and even they who are now no more are counted in the holy league. Is it then from the calculations of interest, is it from bad motives, that men so superior, in situations and countries so different, should be in such harmony in their political opinions? Knowledge doubtless is requisite to enable us to soar above prejudices: but it is in the soul also that the principles of liberty are founded; they make the heart palpitate like love and friendship, they come from nature, they ennoble the character. One connected series of virtues and ideas seems to form that golden chain described by Homer, which, in binding man to heaven, delivers him from all the fetters of tyranny.

THE END.

EXPLANATORY NOTES,

BY

THE TRANSLATOR.



(A) *Guerre de la Jacquerie* (vol. i. p. 16). This was the name given to an insurrection of the French peasants, which took place in 1358, amidst the troubles which followed the battle of Poitiers and the captivity of King John. This insurrection was very sanguinary ; the peasants (called in a style of familiarity or contempt *les Jacques*) were extremely irritated against their oppressors the *noblesse*, and are said to have massacred all who came in their way, without distinction of age or sex. Their triumphs, however, were short-lived ; the *noblesse* took up arms, first for defence, and afterwards for revenge, and found little difficulty in subduing these undisciplined bands.

The persecution of the Knights Templars took place in the beginning of the fourteenth century ; the assassinations of the Duke of Orleans, and Duke of Burgundy, a century later.



The respective dates of the three races of the kings of France referred to by Madame de Staël in this and other chapters were as follows :

I. *Merovingian Race.*

A. D.

Began with Clovis 481

Ended with Childeric 751

Lasted 270 years.

II. *Carlovingian Race.*

A. D.

Began with Pepin 751

Ended with Louis V. 986

Lasted 235 years.

III. *Capetian Race.*

A. D.

Began with Hugh Capet 987

And still continues on the throne.

(B) *Convulsionnaires* (vol. i. p. 41). This was the name given to those fanatics, who, in the year 1731, were in the habit of repairing to the grave of Pâris, a Jansenist priest, in the church-yard of St. Medard at Paris. They went thither in quest of supernatural convulsions, and continued their ridiculous practices till January, 1732, when the church-yard was shut up by order of government.

(C) *Lit de Justice* (vol. i. p. 52), in the old jurisprudence of France, was a solemn meeting of the parliament, in presence of the king, who was seated under a canopy, on a cushion, with a cushion at his back and one on each side, which together formed the *lit* or bed of justice. Besides the presidents and counsellors of parliament, there appeared, on these occasions of solemnity, the princes of the blood and the peers of the realm. They formerly delivered their opinions on the subject in deliberation *viva voce*; but in latter times, the chancellor went from bench to bench to collect the votes. The

whole was a form, but one of those forms that were subservient to essential purposes, being generally adopted for the registering of important edicts, to which the parliament would not give a voluntary assent.

The *Conseillers de Parlement* were members of the old parliaments of France, not in the capacity of pleaders, as the name seems at first to imply, but in a judicial capacity.

(D) *Taille* (vol. i. p. 83), a tax in France previous to the Revolution, imposed partly on property, but partly also on persons; it was peculiarly obnoxious to the lower orders.

(E) *Tabouret* (vol. i. p. 199). By this is to be understood the right of sitting, instead of standing, in presence of the king at what was called *les grands couverts*, that is, when the king dined in public. These privileges belonged only to duchesses, to the ladies of ambassadors and to the *dames d'atours* of the queen.

(F) *Rutli* (vol. i. p. 253) is the name of a meadow on the banks of the Lake of the Four cantons, "where the three founders of Swiss liberty, *Furst*, *Staufacher*, and *Melckthal*, met and formed a compact between the cantons of Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden."

(G) *Prevotal Courts* (vol. i. p. 279). The term *prevôt* (from which is derived the English word provost) was formerly applied to various establishments in France; judges resident in the smaller towns, and authorized to try offences occurring among the middling and lower classes (the *non privilégiés*), subject to an appeal to Paris. After the return of the Bourbons, in July, 1815, courts, chiefly for the trial of offences of a seditious nature, were established under the name of *Cours prévôtales*, and continued in force until the close of the session of the Chambers, in the spring of 1818.

(H) '*Acts of the Apostles*' (vol. i. p. 289).—"Actes des

Apôtres," was the name of a counter-revolutionary journal, published by Peltier and others in the time of the Constituent Assembly.

(A) *Oeil de Bœuf* (vol. iii. p. 82).—This expression, which in architecture means a window of an oval form, was applied at the old French court to the antichamber of the king's room at Versailles; where the various pretenders to royal favour were in the habit of meeting, and of casting on each other the jealous eyes alluded to in the text.

*Dates of the chief Historical Events connected
with the preceding Work.*

- 1774—May 10—Accession of Louis XVI.
 1776..... Appointment of M. Necker to the ministry of Finance.
 Declaration of war against England.
 1781—May —Resignation of M. Necker.
 1783—Jan. 20—Peace between France and England.
 1785..... Suspension of the power of the Stadtholder in Holland; two years afterwards the Prussians invaded Holland and reinstated the Stadtholder.
 1787—Feb. 22—First assembly of the Notables at Versailles.
 1788—Sept. —Second appointment of M. Necker to the ministry; he was now prime minister.
—Nov. 6—Second assembly of the Notables at Versailles.

- 1788—Dec. 27—Act of council by Louis XVI for allowing the *Tiers Etat* as many representatives as the two other orders together.
- 1789—May 5—Meeting of the States General at Versailles.
-—June 17—Assumption of the title of National Assembly by the majority of the States General.
-—June 20—Oath taken by the Assembly at the *Jue de Paume*.
-—June 23—The *Séance Royale*.
-—June 24—The majority of the clergy join the National Assembly.
-—June 25—The minority of the *Noblesse* join the National Assembly.
-—June 27—Definitive union of the three orders in the National Assembly.
-—July 3—March of the German regiments towards Paris.
-—July 10—The Assembly address the King to send back the German regiments.
-—July 11—M. Necker's dismissal and departure to the frontier.
-—July 14—Insurrection at Paris; capture of the Bastille.
-—July 15—The King comes to the Assembly, and announces that the troops are ordered back. Beginning of the emigration.
-—July 16—Address of the Assembly demanding the dismissal of ministers, and the recall of M. Necker; the King consents.
-—July 17—The King visits Paris to calm the popular ferment.

- 1789—Aug. 4—Decree of the Assembly for the abolition of privileges and feudal rights in France.
-—Oct. 5 & 6—March of the populace from Paris to Versailles; the King and Royal Family obliged to remove to Paris, whither they are followed by the National Assembly.
-—Nov. 2—The church-lands in France declared National property.
-—Dec. 21—First emission of *assignats*.
- 1790—Feb. 13—Suppression of religious orders and monastic vows in France.
-—Feb. 20—Death of the Emperor Joseph II; he was succeeded by Leopold II.
-—July 14—The Federation, or celebration of the anniversary of the capture of the Bastile.
- 1790—Sept. 4—Resignation of M. Necker.
- 1791—May 15—Decree of the Assembly admitting men of colour to the rights of citizens.
-—June 21—Flight of Louis XVI; he was stopped at Varennes.
-—Aug. 27—Convention of Pilnitz between Austria, Prussia, and Saxony, in regard to the affairs of France.
-—Sept. 14—Acceptance of the Constitution by Louis XVI.
-—Sept. 30—Close of the first Assembly called the Constituent.
-—Oct. 1—Meeting of the second Assembly called the Legislative Assembly.
- 1792—March 1—Death of the Emperor Leopold II; he was succeeded by Francis II, the present emperor.
-—March 29—Death of Gustavus III, king of Sweden, in consequence of assassination.

- 1792—June 20—Insurrection of the populace of the suburbs ; the multitude enter the Tuileries but are dispersed without bloodshed.
-—July 14—Oath of the Federation, on the third anniversary of the destruction of the Bastile.
-—July 26—Proclamation of the Duke of Brunswick as general of the Prussian army.
-—Aug. 10—Insurrection in Paris ; forcible entrance into the Tuileries and massacre of the guards ; suspension of the King's power.
-—Sept. 2—Massacres of the clergy and other royalists in Paris.
-—Sept. 21—Close of the Legislative Assembly and opening of the National Convention ; royalty abolished ; the republican government proclaimed in France ; retreat of the Prussians from Champagne.
-—Nov. 6—Victory of Du Mourier over the Austrians at Jemmappes.
- 1793—Jan. 21—Execution of Louis XVI.
-—Feb. 1—War declared by the National Convention against England and Holland.
-—April 6—The committee *de Salut public* formed by the Convention.
-—May 31—Proscription of the Girondists ; success of the Jacobins ; beginning of the reign of terror.
-—June 24—A new constitution, called Constitution of 1793, presented by the Convention to the French people.
-—Sept. 29—Prices arbitrarily regulated by the law of the *maximum*.
-—Oct. 6—Introduction of the new French calendar.
-—Oct. 25—Execution of the Queen.

- 1793—Oct. 31—Execution of Brissot, Vergniaud, Gensonné, and others : complete ascendancy of the Jacobins.
-—May 10—Execution of Madame Elizabeth followed particularly after 10 June, by a rapid succession of judicial murders until
- 1794—July 27—Fall of Robespierre ; end of the reign of terror.
- 1795—January —Holland occupied by the French.
-—May 17—Peace between France and Prussia concluded at Bâle.
-—July 2—Peace between France and Spain concluded likewise at Bâle.
-—Aug. 22—New constitution decreed by the Convention ; the executive power lodged in the Directory.
-—Oct. 26—Close of the National Convention, after sitting three years.
-—Oct. 28—Opening of the new Legislative Body in two houses ; one, the Council of Elders, the other, the Council of Five Hundred.
-—Nov. 4—The Executive Directory installed.
- 1796—March 30—Bonaparte appointed to the command in Italy.
-—April 12, 13, 14, 15—His first victories, followed by the occupation of Piedmont and Lombardy.
-—Oct. & Nov.—Lord Malmesbury's negotiation at Paris.
-—Nov. 17—Death of Catharine II of Russia.
-—Dec. 15—Failure of the French expedition against Ireland under Gen. Hocke.
- 1797—April 18—Preliminaries of Leoben between France and Austria.

- 1797—July & Aug.—Lord Malmesbury's negotiation at Lisle.
—Sept. 4—Revolution of the 18th Fructidor at Paris,
 in favour of Barras and his party; banishment of Carnot, Pichegru, Barthelemy, and others.
- 1798—May 19—The French expedition for Egypt sails from Toulon.
—June 12—They capture Malta.
—July 2—They land in Egypt.
—August 1—Their fleet destroyed by Nelson at Aboukir.
- 1799—March 1—Renewal of war on the Continent.
 .. April to Sept.—Successes of the Allies in Italy, Germany, and Switzerland.
—Sept. —Holland invaded by the English and Russians.
—Oct. 16—Bonaparte arrives at Paris from Egypt.
—Nov. 9—Revolution of 18th Brumaire in favour of Bonaparte.
- 1800—May —Successes of Moreau in Germany.
—June 14—Victory of Bonaparte at Marengo, followed by the evacuation of Piedmont and Lombardy by the Austrians.
—Dec. 3—Victory of Moreau at Hohenlinden.
- 1801—Feb. 9—Peace of Luneville between France and Germany.
—Oct. 1—Preliminaries of peace between France and England.
- 1802—March 22—Peace concluded at Amiens.
—August 2—Bonaparte proclaimed Consul for life.
—Oct. —Switzerland occupied by the French.
- 1803—May 16—Renewal of war between France and England.
 1804—March 21—Execution of the Duc d'Enghien.
—May 18—Bonaparte declared Emperor.

- 1804—Dec. 2—Crowned and anointed by the Pope.
- 1805—April 11—Secret treaty of St Petersburg for a third coalition against France.
-—Aug. 27—The French troops marched from Boulogne to the Rhine.
-—Sept. 25—Passage of the Rhine by the French.
-—Oct. 19—Capitulation of the Austrians at Ulm.
-—Oct. 21—Battle of Trafalgar.
-—Nov. 13—The French enter Vienna.
-—Dec. 2—Battle of Austerlitz.
-—Dec. 26—Peace of Presburg between France and Austria.
- 1806—June 5—Louis Bonaparte proclaimed King of Holland.
-—July 12—Formation of the Confederation of the Rhine.
- Lord Lauderdale's negotiation at Paris.
-—Oct. 1—Bonaparte crosses the Rhine at Mentz to march against the Prussians.
-—Oct. 14—Victory of Bonaparte at Jena.
-—Oct. 27—Bonaparte enters Berlin; the Prussian army surrender in detail.
-—Nov. 21—His Berlin decree against British commerce.
- 1807—Feb. 8—Battle of Eylau.
-—June 14—Defeat of the Russians at Friedland.
-—July 7—Peace of Tilsit.
- 1808—April 15—Bonaparte arrives at Bayonne.
-—May 9—Abdication of the King of Spain, and cession of all his territories to Bonaparte.
-—June 6—Joseph Bonaparte proclaimed King of Spain—insurrection in Austria and other parts of Spain against the French.
-—July 20—Capitulation of General Dupont to the Spaniards.

- 1808—August 1—Joseph Bonaparte retires from Madrid.
—Nov. 5—Arrival of Napoleon at head quarters at Vitoria; followed by the defeat of the Spanish armies.
—Dec. 4—The French re-occupy Madrid.
 1809—Jan. 16—Battle of Corunna; death of Sir John Moore.
—April 9—War renewed between Austria and France.
—April 22—Victory of Bonaparte at Eckmuhl.
—May 13—Surrender of Vienna.
—May 21, 22—French defeated at Aspern.
—July 7—Austrians defeated at Wagram.
—July 12—Armistice between France and Austria.
—Oct. 14—Definitive treaty between these powers.
 1810—Jan. 9—The marriage of Bonaparte and Josephine annulled.
—April 1—Marriage of Bonaparte to Maria Louisa of Austria.
—July 3—Abdication of the throne of Holland by Louis.
—July 9—Holland united to France.
—Oct. —Advance of Massena into Portugal.
 1811—March 5—Retreat of Massena from Portugal.
—May 16—Battle of Albuera, near Badajos, between Soult and Marshal Beresford.
 1812—March 14—Treaty between France and Austria, previous to the hostilities against Russia.
—June 22—War declared by France against Russia.
—June 23—The French army cross the Niemen.
—Sept. 7—Battle of Borodino; followed by the entry of the French into Moscow.
—Oct. 19—The French evacuate Moscow; their disastrous retreat.
—Nov. 28—Passage of the Beresina—total loss of the French army.

- 1813—Jan. —New Conscriptions for the French army.
....—April —Bonaparte crosses the Rhine and enters Saxony.
....—May —Battles of Lutzen and Bautzen, followed by an armistice.
....—August —Austria joins the Allies; rupture of the armistice.
....—Oct. —Battles of Leipsic and Hanau; evacuation of Germany by the French.
1814—Jan. —Invasion of France by the Allies.
....—Feb. & Mar.—Various conflicts with alternate Success in Champagne.
....—March 31—Paris occupied by the Allies.

